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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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CORRESPONDENCE

Conversely

To the editors:

John B. Judis ("White Squall," March 11) has his American history wrong. The Republican Party became the party of business only with the 1936 election when the business class felt betrayed by FDR, not since the Civil War.

Before the '36 election, the business classes were pretty much in bed with the political power of their localities. Thus, Cleveland was Republican territory while New Orleans was Democratic turf. Of course not all cities were equal. New York (Wall Street) had been Democratic since President Jackson did it a favor by vetoing the charter renewal of the Bank of the United States (located in Philadelphia). There were important Republicans in New York, like the Rockefellers (from Cleveland), but the dominant players like J.P. Morgan, the Astors and Harriman were Dems.

If you check the list of Democratic presidential nominees between the Civil War and the New Deal you'll find a good sampling of Wall Street lawyers. Grover Cleveland was J.P. Morgan's lawyer. Sam Tilden was the lawyer for the railroads. John W. Davis was another Wall Street lawyer.

Wendell Wilkie is the exception that proves my case. The Boy Wonder of Wall Street and Republican nominee in 1940 was a Democrat up until a short time before. His nomination was like a seal on the party realignment.

STEPHEN B. ADLER
New York, New York

To the editors:

I was quite surprised to find, in John B. Judis's otherwise intelligently written article "White Squall," the following solecism:

"Many of the economic nationalists within the Republican Party do not belong to the religious right. But the corollary isn't true: most of the religious right's rank-and-file are solidly with Buchanan on economic issues."

"If one is on the religious right, one is with Buchanan on economic issues" is the converse of the condition that Judis denies, "If one is an economic nationalist, one belongs to the religious right." A corollary, on the other hand, is a theorem that follows from another theorem. The ninth- and tenth-graders at our school learn to use these words correctly in their geometry class.

ETAN SAVIR
The Woodlands, Texas

To the editors:

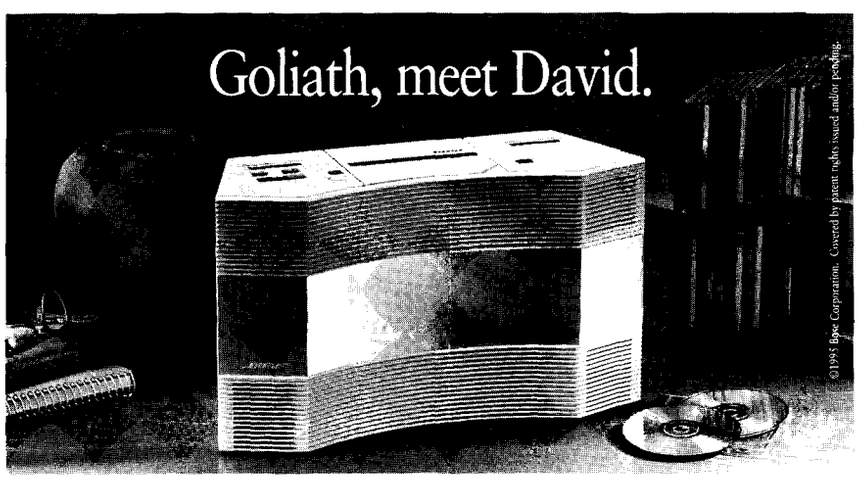
John B. Judis's article on Steve Forbes's ideas is filled with distortions and highly questionable analysis. His statement that Forbes wants to return us to "the regressive system of the nineteenth century, when money was raised largely through tariffs and sales taxes" is an outright fabrication. Forbes has proposed no increased sales taxes, and he wants to reduce tariffs.

From Judis's statement that "in either case, the flat tax would be acutely regressive" I can only conclude that he is unfamiliar with the definition of the word "regressive." A tax is regressive when the poor pay a larger percentage of their income than do the rich. A true flat tax applies the tax to all incomes equally and therefore, by definition, is neither progressive or regressive.

Furthermore, I fail to see how Judis's point about foreign investment in the '80s refutes Forbes's point that interest rates did not go up when the deficit ballooned. Foreigners were investing in a healthy economy, which is what has resulted from lowering marginal tax rates in the '20s, '60s and '80s. All Judis's point does is illustrate why tax-cut-induced deficits don't drive up interest rates, it doesn't change the fact.

Judis's analysis of plans to preserve Social Security descends into sheer demagoguery. He states that "a young corporate lawyer could choose whether to pay Social Security or invest that part of his income in a hot mutual fund" but someone nearing retirement can't, and we need the corporate lawyer's money in the system. What he is touching on is the transition problem, namely prefunding the retirement of current workers while funding current retirees under the pay-as-you-go system. While there is no perfect option for how to do that, absolutely no one suggests doing it by cutting current or soon-to-be retirees, and Judis's assumption that it would be done that way is patently unfair.

It is ironic that Judis defends the current income tax, Social Security and Medicare programs because they redistribute income when actually the mandatory but partly privatized retirement system would be more redistributionist than the current system. The corporate lawyer of whom Judis is so jealous will have plenty of money to put into hot mutual funds regardless of what type of mandatory retirement plan we have, but those who can't save and whose only retirement is Social Security get only those benefits with their tiny treasury-bond interest rates. The huge increase in demand for mutual funds and IRAs etc. when payroll deductions



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are put into those instruments will cause those interest rates to fall while the interest on Treasury bonds will have to increase in order to find anyone to buy them. Thus, not only will the pool of retirement funds be increased, but they will be more evenly distributed. Social Security is known as the third rail of politics precisely because any proposal to change the system for the better is met with demagogic scare tactics from people like John B. Judis when in fact it is his do-nothing approach that will kill the system.

PAUL D. TRAMPE
Springfield, Virginia

John B. Judis replies:

Forbes would return us to a regressive system *like* that in the nineteenth century. It would be "acutely regressive" because the wealthy would not be taxed on their income from interest, dividends and capital gains. The dollars through which the Japanese helped fund our ballooning budget deficit came from our merchandise trade deficit, not then, nor now, a sign of a healthy economy.

Penny wise

To the editors:

Is this a private quarrel, or can any number join in? In the March 11 TNR, Gary Whitlock replies to a letter by J.E. Link, who was replying to an assertion by Matthew Miller about the mortgage interest deduction. The discussion seems to have reached a broader issue.

Whitlock says that he knows of no "naturally occurring, untainted-by-government source of money that I can call my own." His point seems to be that the government can tax his money from him (and mine from me, etc.) regardless of whether he owns a home and other such facts because, after all, as he elsewhere puts it, the money is printed by the government, anyway. Render unto Caesar, eh?

There are two logical difficulties here. First, the paper the government prints only *measures* wealth, it does not constitute wealth. I don't owe any of my wealth to the government in return for their dubious service in forcing a particular measurement thereof upon me. Second, wealth in a welfare-state society is very broadly "tainted" by government (interesting choice of word there, Mr. Whitlock), but it is never produced by government.

It doesn't grow on trees, either. Wealth is generated by the energies and will of individuals.

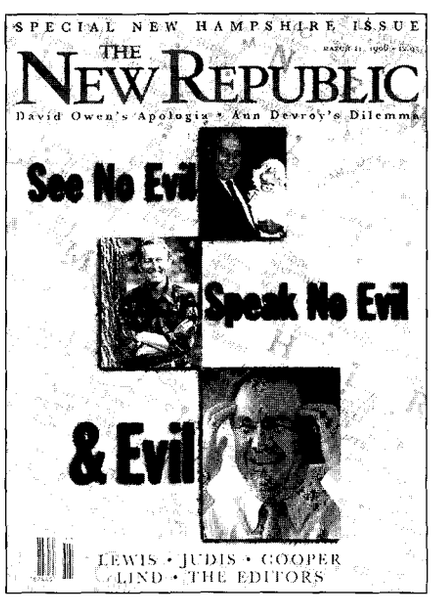
CHRISTOPHER C. FAILLE
Enfield, Connecticut

Roy Cohnish

To the editors:

In the March 11 issue, mimicking what has been seen on all the major networks, TNR has leveled false charges against me without checking its facts. After asking "Who is Larry Pratt?" the editorial plays the "guilt by association" game in trying to tar and feather me. If we're going to play guilt by association, then should every person that attended the Million Man March—or every person that appeared on stage at that event—be linked to holding the same racist views as Louis Farrakhan?

I am a member of Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership. The leader of that organization, Aaron Zelman, just recently issued a statement



saying that JPFO and Gun Owners of America have worked hand in hand to restore the Second Amendment rights of all Americans and will continue to do so.

I am a member of the Congress of Racial Equality. The National Chairman of CORE, Roy Innis, has this to say of our friendship: "We have walked the streets of the black community explaining to black people their rights under the Constitution. Larry Pratt and I will continue our efforts undeterred."

On a more personal level, the woman I have been married to for over thirty years is a native Central American, and we speak Spanish in our home.

I loathe the Aryan Nation and other racist groups with every fiber of my being. I have never belonged to or advocated membership in any group which devalues the integrity of human life.

On a professional level, I have shared platforms with many who are my ideological opponents. For instance, last year during the debate over the so-called anti-terrorism bill, I took the stage with the ACLU to denounce that bill. THE NEW REPUBLIC has not, however, selected to label me a closet liberal for that reason.

LARRY PRATT
Springfield, Virginia

To the editors:

The worst part of "Who Is Larry Pratt?"—the Roy Cohnish editorial complaining that Pat Buchanan is associating with a man who has associated with racists—was your comment that the bigoted Christian Identity movement is "closely tied to violent militia groups such as the one that spawned Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols." Is there a single word in that phrase that is not misleading? McVeigh and Nichols never belonged to the same militia (indeed, it's unclear whether McVeigh ever belonged to any militias, so "the," "one," and "and" are all wrong. Nichols was tossed out of his militia for advocating violence, so "violent" is inaccurate. And McVeigh and Nichols arrived at their radical political stances without any militia's tutelage, so "spawned" is out, too.

Whether "closely tied to" fits depends on whose estimate of the level of racist penetration of the militia movement you believe; considering that Jews, blacks, Hispanics and even New Agers continue to take part in the militias, I'm inclined to toss that phrase out as well. Which means striking "militia groups," too. That leaves "such as" and "the," along with bonus points for spelling McVeigh and Nichols's names correctly.

JESSE WALKER
Port Townsend, Washington

Fair enough?

To the editors:

Both David Owen and Misha Glenny believe that the situation in the former Yugoslavia is complex, nuanced and deeply rooted. THE NEW REPUBLIC believes that the problem is a matter of easily laid blame. Fair enough.

The fact that Owen and Glenny share views you do not, however, is no reason to accuse them of something questionable when they express their agreement on some points. For you to call this "a plug," "logrolling" and "one hand washing another," as you do in the Notebook (March 11), is perhaps worthy of Oliver Stone but hardly of TNR.

PATRICK BAUDE
Bloomington, Indiana

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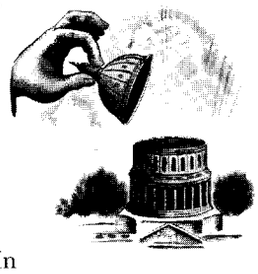
FROM WASHINGTON

Doling it out

By the time you read this, Bob Dole may already have broken the law. Candidates who take federal matching funds can only spend $37 million in this year's primary, and Dole campaign manager Scott Reed has predicted his man will hit the limit by the Rustbelt primaries on March 19. So will Dole go home to the Watergate and forget all that annoying "why I want to be president" stuff until San Diego? Maybe take in a subcommittee meeting or two? Not exactly. Just as the Dole campaign officially grinds to a halt, various Republican do-gooders will create organizations with names like "Americans for Freedom" or "Citizens for the Future" to spend money on Bob Dole's behalf. Of course, they won't be doing it at the Dole campaign's behest, because that would be illegal. And they won't run ads saying "vote for Bob Dole," because that, too, would be illegal. No, their ads will simply "educate" voters about Bill Clinton, as did the pro-Bush pedagogues who "independently" produced the Willie Horton ad against Michael Dukakis in 1988. Yet some of these K Street Samaritans will probably employ, swap money or do lunch with people who actually work for Bob Dole—in violation of federal election law. And then? Will the machinery of American justice spring into action, exposing Dole's political carcass for opponents and the press to feast on through the rest of the election year? Not exactly, because in cases such as these American justice is represented by the Federal Election Commission.

Faced with the corrupting influence of money in American politics, Perotian populists, high-minded conservatives, anti-system leftists, outraged militia members, renascent Mugwumps and just about everyone else demand new election laws. Bill Bradley is filling the nation's op-ed pages with calls to reverse the 1976 Supreme Court decision *Buckley* v. *Valeo*, which makes it unconstitutional to impose mandatory limits on campaign spending. Paul Taylor, a talented former *Washington Post* reporter, has ditched journalism for a Tolstoyan crusade to get the networks to provide free air time. Congresswoman Linda Smith and her allies on the "black helicopter" right are donning war paint for a frontal assault on political action committees. But the 1974 law regulating presidential primary campaigns isn't that bad. It provides strong incentives for contenders to accept spending limits (all the 1996 candidates worth less than $400 million did so), and it allows independent groups to spend money that indirectly helps whomever they choose, which would be fine—if they really were independent. The problem isn't the law, but the law enforcer: the FEC.

Consider what the commission did the last time it got word of the Dole gang's shenanigans. During Dole's 1988 campaign, a PAC called Campaign America, ostensibly unrelated to the Dole for President organization, colluded with it to exceed spending limits in Iowa and New Hampshire. The FEC levied fines. *Five years later.* And Dole was unlucky. In that same election, backers of George Bush set up the Fund for America's Future (again, note the eerily insipid name), whose spending, since it occurred before Bush had officially decided to run, did not count against election limits. Although a Democrat on the commission said that "only someone just alighting from a UFO" could believe that the fund wasn't promoting Bush's candidacy, the FEC took no action. Brooks Jackson, the author of a 1990 Twentieth Century Fund report, declared, "The FEC has failed. It has neither the will nor the means to deter wanton violators, who sometimes ridicule openly the commission's weakness. It has interpreted the law so permissively that special interest groups may funnel money to candidates practically without limit if they wish."



Why doesn't the FEC do a better job? Because it's beholden to the people it regulates. The Senate confirms the commission's six presidential appointees, but since three must be Democrats and three Republicans, they're essentially chosen by party bosses. In 1993, for instance, Dole wrote to the White House suggesting it renominate GOP commissioner Lee Ann Elliott to a third term. But, as *Roll Call* and the Center for Responsive Politics noted, only three weeks earlier, while she was lobbying for renomination, Elliott had participated in an FEC "conciliation agreement" with the Dole campaign on its 1988 violations. The implication was clear: commission members are not independent from the congressional leaders who select them. As a result, the FEC often deadlocks along party lines, and candidates from both sides of the aisle get off lightly.

Not only does Congress try to keep the commissioners pliant, it denies them the means to investigate properly. Over the years, Congress has banned the FEC from acting on anonymous information, outlawed IRS-style random inspections and cut its staff. The result is that FEC investigations take forever. *The Christian Science Monitor* reported that an inquiry into a donation from Mark Weinberg, a California man who gave $45,000 ($44,000 more than the legal limit) to Alan Cranston's 1984 presidential campaign, took more than five years, although Weinberg admitted his guilt from the beginning.

In 1993, President Clinton's campaign finance reform plan included provisions allowing the FEC's general counsel to act independently of its political appointees. The Heritage Foundation predictably denounced the proposal for empowering "a career bureaucrat," but this was the whole point. If the commission is to effectively enforce campaign law, it must be insulated from the people it regulates. An even more important reform, which Clinton didn't introduce, would allow the FEC to issue injunctions against illegal spending *during* a campaign, while the wrongdoing still matters politically.

The Clinton plan, which also proposed voluntary spending limits and public financing for congressional campaigns, died a quick and painful death. (Ironically, some Republicans argued that, since existing campaign regulations weren't well-enforced, it was foolhardy to propose new ones.) But with populist winds sweeping through Washington once again, a renewed campaign reform effort is underway, led by Linda Smith, Christopher Shays and Martin Meehan in the House and Russell Feingold, John McCain and Fred Thompson in the Senate. Most commentators have focused on the legislation's ban on PACs, its cap on out-of-state donations and its voluntary spending limits for congressional campaigns. But buried in the bill are "miscellaneous provisions"—for surprise FEC audits and on-the-spot injunctions—that may have more impact than the high-profile clauses that overshadow them. The bill's sponsors should make these FEC reforms an integral part of their crusade. Perhaps they can push them through while Bob Dole is still out campaigning.

PETER BEINART

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

APRIL 8, 1996

CHINESE BOXES

Now playing in the Taiwan Straits: the second act of a comic opera that first opened in 1958, when Chairman Mao shelled Taiwanese islands on alternate days and during breaks in the action talked peace with Washington. This time, Mao's successors have deployed 150,000 soldiers and 300 war planes and launched four Scud-like missiles near Taiwan's busiest port. After each fireworks show, the foreign minister assures Washington that Beijing seeks "peaceful reconciliation," then leaves to aim the next day's missiles. Meanwhile, Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui takes on the role of Matsu, a legendary goddess-martyr who tries valiantly to save her island countrymen from outside invaders. And, in the third act, the Seventh Fleet glides in to steal the show.

So far, so good. The Chinese are not about to invade Taiwan anytime soon and have said they will stop the shelling after the island's March 23 elections. Their tantrum has given President Clinton an important opportunity: by deploying, without hesitation, the largest American armada in the Pacific since the Vietnam War, he's proven that his paralyzing empathy is not, in fact, boundless. But, even if this storm off the coast of China turns out to be more thunder than lightning, China is clearly a rising military power capable of posing a more serious test in the future. So what is America's guiding principle? Next time MFN arises and stories leak about China shipping arms and nuclear technology to Pakistan, violating U.S. copyrights or trafficking in human organs, should the president confront Beijing head on, or turn the other way?

On this question, there are two, often equally histrionic camps. On one side are those Republicans, led by Newt Gingrich, who believe the U.S. should stick it to China and recognize Taiwan. As it celebrates its first democratic elections, the besieged underdog deserves our support, goes the argument. Bob Dole, who suggested giving Taiwan a seat in the U.N., takes this view (expect his China-bashing to heat up as summer rolls around). So do senators such as Arlen Specter, who blustered, "Why not get really tough with China...?"

This is an understandable sentiment, given China's maddening petulance and its human rights violations. Still, it would be risky to act on it, considering the depth of the Chinese leadership's obsession with "the renegade province" of Taiwan. (In a recent *New York Times* column, Thomas Friedman recounts a meeting during which Chinese officials would talk about nothing but *Senegal*'s recognition of Taiwan.)

The Clinton administration, in contrast to the Republicans' righteous indignation (and the Clinton 1992 campaign's own rhetoric), hews to the gentler line of "comprehensive engagement," whereby the U.S. plies the Chinese with sweets to induce them to behave. Engagers are the new Kremlinologists, obsessively reading the *People's Daily* for veiled hints of China's true orientation. What they usually discover is that our fixation on Tiananmen and human rights offends Beijing, and that Lee Teng-hui has done his share to antagonize the Chinese with his campaign bravado. From open markets follows the rule of law, the engagers argue, and eventually, democracy.

But what if China won't listen, if our every attempt to court its leaders falls flat? After all, their behavior so far is anything but reassuring. We grant them MFN status, and they arrest Harry Wu. We sign a trade agreement with them, and they pirate all our movies. No matter what we give, they consistently characterize American moves as "hostile." Quite simply, the junta in Beijing has more to gain by vilifying the U.S. than engaging it. In a Communist country now inundated with VCRs, the dictators desperately need a new claim to legitimacy. The best they can come up with is bellicose nationalism packaged as the last bulwark against Western domination. The timing of their missile flexing is no accident: on the eve of Taiwan's acceptance of the foreigner's political system, China shoots.

China is not a great power to be feared or loved but a spoiler state, sometimes to be humored with patience but never to be overindulged. Sending ships to the Taiwan Straits and selling anti-aircraft missiles is a measured way to register American disapproval of Chinese thuggishness—in the language that China's rulers understand best. The crisis around Taiwan may also spur the U.S. and Japan to reevaluate, and possibly enhance, Japan's role as a counterweight to China in matters of regional security. China is too big and too prosperous—and other Western nations are too eager to do business with it—for American economic sanctions to have much impact on the behavior of its government. But, as we continue to trade with China, we should at least end the utopian charade that we are thereby democratizing it. This is the safest way, and the least embarrassing. •

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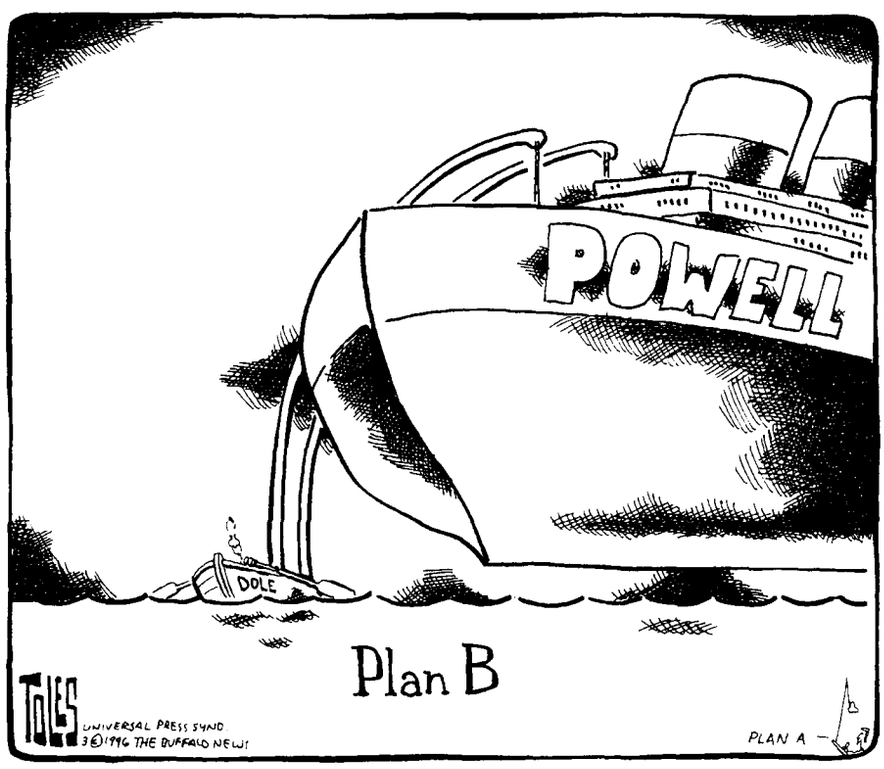
NOTEBOOK

SIC TRANSIT: "The Redneck Shop," a Ku Klux Klan souvenir store and museum, opened for business in Laurens, South Carolina.... U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell posed for a Banana Republic advertisement.... Larry Lonchar, a convict on Georgia's death row, has offered to donate a kidney to retired detective Melvin Ferguson, who testified against him.... Recent callers to 911 in New York City have been put on hold, according to *The New York Post*.... Insects in Hilton Head, South Carolina, are becoming drunk from alcoholic berries and splatting themselves against windows.... Asked to provide a one-word description for each of the major presidential candidates, 5 percent of people in the Pew Center for The People and The Press survey responded "pineapple" for Senator Robert Dole.



HOWARD'S END: Nothing causes confusion in Afrocentric circles like the issue of black slavery in the Sahel, the swath of territory that separates North and sub-Saharan Africa. For ideologues who conceive of Africa as a seamless, unitary civilization, with its highest expression either in pharaonic Egypt or the kingdoms of pre-colonial Islam, the centuries-old warfare along this dividing line, conflict characterized by long-standing Arab and Muslim disdain toward the darker-skinned, animist peoples of the south, is a source of some cognitive dissonance. Such dissonance was on display last week when Congress held hearings on slavery in the Sahelian countries of Mauritania and the Sudan, both run by Arabic-speaking Muslim oligarchies known for persecuting followers of traditional African faiths. The slavery charges were supported by human rights groups such as the forthrightly named Coalition Against Slavery in Mauritania and the Sudan. The deniers included former Congressman Mervyn M. Dymally—who is paid $120,000 a year by Mauritania to say exactly this sort of thing—and a representative of a crackpot Lyndon LaRouche outfit called the Schiller Institute. Gee, who to believe? According to *The Washington Post*, Dymally did concede that "there may be the appearance of slavery." But he then added that to call the practice "black slavery" is misleading because "Colin Powell wouldn't be considered black in Mauritania." Hmm. To set the matter straight, a State Department African affairs official declared he "didn't think anyone is enslaving anyone in Mauritania"—then added that he'd "feel very uncomfortable saying [slavery] didn't exist." At least Howard University, which courageously refused to host Nation of Islam Minister Khallid Muhammad's nut-fest the night before the Million Man March (and was dubbed "Coward Jewniversity" by the evening's organizers as a result) took a stand, right? Wrong. "[T]here are many points of view," said a spokesman at a university-sponsored forum on the issue. "Howard University takes no position on it."

SCHOOL PLAY: In the past few weeks, national teachers' unions have lobbied hard and succeeded in sinking a small GOP pilot program that would have allowed Washington's poorest school children to attend private schools with the aid of vouchers. In Congress, the politicking on the issue proved especially hypocritical: some of the bill's most ardent opponents, those who argued that the public schools are still the nation's best hope for a better education system, sent their own children to private schools. Senator Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts, who said his goal has always been "to support public schools, not abandon them," enrolled his children in the tony Washington private schools St. Albans and the National Cathedral School. The children of Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island, who drummed up the votes to defeat the measure, attended private school in Rhode Island. (President Clinton pledged to veto the voucher bill. But, as everyone knows, his daughter, Chelsea, goes to Sidwell Friends, a private school in the District.) In fact, of the forty-four senators who voted against the voucher plan, only one has sent a child to a Washington public school—Ernest Hollings of South Carolina, in the 1970s. Nor are the Republicans without their hypocrites. James Jeffords, who chairs the D.C. Appropriations subcommittee, has tried and failed

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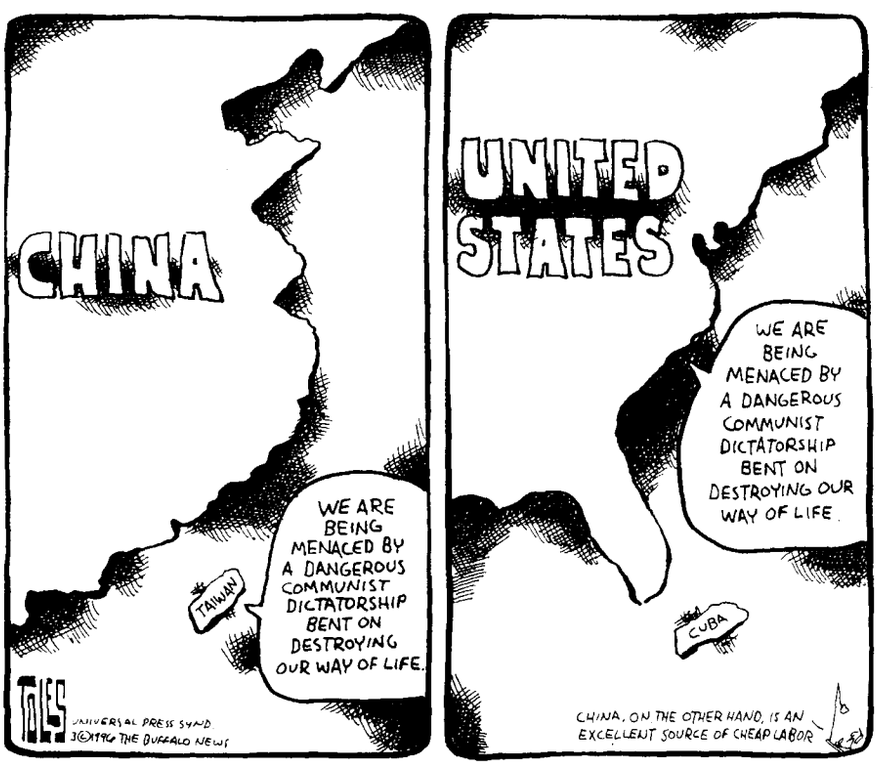
four times to pass a voucher program for the District. He chose to send his children to school in Vermont, his home state, rather than Washington.

THE GOOD DIVORCE: Nelson and Winnie Nomzamo Mandela's divorce proceedings this week, filled with intimate details of her dalliances during his time in prison and of his private despair during the public euphoria following his 1990 release, fascinated all of South Africa like the poignant soap opera it was. But, politically speaking, the trial's most intriguing aspect was Winnie Mandela's call for "traditional tribal" mediation from Kaiser Matanzima, former head of the apartheid-created Xhosa "homeland" of Transkei. Self-styled traditionalists like Matanzima were long reviled as puppets of the white South African regime, polar opposites of Winnie Mandela and her supporters on the ANC's militant fringe. But now both Winnie and Matanzima, who find themselves shut out by the ANC's moderate establishment, might ally. Ideologically they are both racial separatists, disdainful of the influence wielded in the Congress by whites and Indians. And, together, they could play on popular distrust of the younger ANC leaders, who do not show Mandela's deference to traditional custom and sometimes reveal an embarrassing lack of facility with native languages. The divorce may open the door for Winnie to leave the ANC, and, if she wanted to, she might take control of the Pan-African Congress, the black-consciousness party that garnered only a few percentage points in the 1994 elections. The PAC, considered in cold-war terms to be ultra-left, would be a strange bedfellow for former homeland leaders like Matanzima. But the PAC is not only all black, but almost all Xhosa, based in the very Eastern Cape where Matanzima once operated his fiefdom. A Xhosa traditionalist party, if it could strike a deal with Gatsha Buthelezi's Zulu-traditionalist Inkatha, which also finds itself in the political wilderness, would become a serious force. There is a precedent for such post-cold war ideological chaos: the 1992 elections in Angola, where rebel leader Jonas Savimbi, hero of the American right, ditched his Milton Friedmanite rhetoric to attack the formerly Marxist ruling party for its associations with mixed-race Angolans. Winnie may be plotting to turn South African politics upside down in a similar fashion. Or maybe she's just trying for a better alimony deal.


CHINA
WE ARE BEING MENACED BY A DANGEROUS COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP BENT ON DESTROYING OUR WAY OF LIFE.
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CUBA
CHINA, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS AN EXCELLENT SOURCE OF CHEAP LABOR

DOLEDRUMS: Throughout the campaign, Bob Dole has been plagued by a lack of "that vision thing." But, in recent weeks, he has stumbled upon two themes that work: the first is the emphasis on Dole as a tested leader, who fought for his country in World War II and spent thirty-nine months after the war recuperating from a debilitating war injury. "I can spot people with a disability now a mile away, and I understand they have problems and they have concerns and they want to be in the mainstream...," he confided to supporters at a recent rally in Bangor, Maine. But one of the primary mechanisms helping people with disabilities move into the mainstream, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which Dole championed, seems to be at odds with his other winning theme: relief from federal regulation and burdensome unfunded federal mandates. "We have stopped unfunded federal mandates. They can't be done anymore without a great deal of justification. If you get an unfunded mandate and you don't have any way to pay for it, you got to go out and raise taxes," a taboo word, indeed, to the cheering crowd he spoke before in January in New Hampshire. But the Americans with Disabilities Act is precisely that: a federal law requiring business and government to spend millions of dollars, without federal assistance, to ensure that public buildings and workplaces are accessible to all. In June of last year, Dole expressed outrage over the results of a study showing that federal regulations cost each American family $6,000 per year. He failed to mention, however, that the study pinpointed five major pieces of legislation that have contributed to that cost, one of which, surprise, is the ADA. •

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JERUSALEM POSTCARD

THE AFTERMATH

By Terence Wrong

With the conclusion of the international conference on terrorism last week, the American media turned their attention back to stories on Dole and downsizing, deciding that this round of suicide bombings in Israel had run its course. But for Israelis, frightened into staying at home, and Palestinians, under a curfew so tight that at times it resembled house arrest, life was anything but back to normal.

A "Condition Red" security warning remains in effect throughout Israel. Despite the tightest closure order ever imposed on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israel's internal security service, the Shin Bet, believes at least one suicide bomber is still on the loose. Early last week, two Palestinians armed with explosives were arrested near Hebron while awaiting orders to explode themselves.

The Shin Bet was taking heat even before the latest bombings. Critics within Israel's large security establishment attacked the timing and publicity surrounding its assassination of Yahya Ayyash ("the Engineer"), the founder of Hamas's suicide bombers. Ayyash's head was blown apart when he answered a jury-rigged cell phone packed with plastic explosives. The critics say that the Shin Bet's eagerness to take credit for the operation was, at best, clumsy. A former Mossad agent put it this way: "The Shin Bet rushed to the Israeli media to say, 'Yes we did it, and here's how,' so naturally Hamas said, 'Oh, fine, the Israelis are admitting it, now how many Jews should we kill?' " Tasteless jokes reprinted in Israeli newspapers didn't help. One example: Ayyash answers the phone, and it's his father. They argue about Hamas strategy until Ayyash's father says, "You'll figure it out—you have a good head on your shoulders."

The former Mossad agent says the assassination's timing was a calculated career move by Carmi Gilon, the Shin Bet's retiring chief. Gilon bore the brunt of the blame for failing to anticipate or prevent the Rabin assassination. Knocking off Ayyash was a way for him to depart on an upbeat note. It worked. Recently, Gilon was named director of Tel Aviv's new subway project. It would have been more ironic had Gilon followed the path of his predecessor, Yaacov Perry: he moved into the private sector as the head of CELLKOM, a cell phone company.

The Shin Bet's new boss is Ami Ayalon, an ex-Navy commander. After the bombings, the prime minister put him in charge of a special inter-service, anti-terror command. Handing this job to a Shin Bet man has made Shimon Peres's already cool relations with army intelligence even cooler. The army blames the Shin Bet for failing to provide adequate "real-time" intelligence on Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Shin Bet, say army sources, relied too heavily on Yasir Arafat's security service and not enough on its own informers, whose numbers have dwindled since Arafat assumed control of Gaza.

Just hours before the February 25 bombings, the Shin Bet relayed to army intelligence a report that a bomber would soon be entering Israel from Gaza. The service asked the army to close the Erez checkpoint into Israel. Amnon Shahak, the chief of staff, refused, saying the warning was too vague.

In the bitter aftermath of the bombings, it's surprising how many Israelis can quote Robert Frost. At least that line about good fences making good neighbors. I must have heard it six times. For twenty years, Shirley Rosov, an artist in Jerusalem, has dreamed of a peace settlement that would allow Palestinians and Israelis to live side by side in states of their own. No longer. "We need to rebuild the Berlin Wall here in Israel, anything to separate us from them," she says. In Jerusalem, a few nonreligious Israelis have even called for resurrecting the old '67 boundary, the wall that ran through the heart of the city when Jordan ruled the West Bank. That would mean cutting Jews off from the Old City's Temple Mount, the most sacred site in Judaism.

Israelis are understandably desperate for a solution. Ariel Sharon has darkly hinted at a retaliatory attack on Iran, which helps sponsor Hamas. For a few days, the idea of wrapping the corpses of suicide bombers in pigskin was seriously mooted in the Israeli press. Someone had remembered that this trick worked for British forces in Malaysia. The rationale goes like this: the bombers only commit suicide because they are sure they are going to heaven, but in Islam the soul cannot permeate a body if it is covered by the skin of an impure animal. Swathe bombers' corpses in pigskin, and the supply of volunteers for suicide missions will dry up. Alas, someone checked with an Islamic scholar at Hebrew University who said forget it. It won't work because, in Islam, anything an infidel does to you doesn't count.

The bitter truth is that there are no quick fixes. Security officials know that there is no effective way to stop a determined suicide bomber. Ask any of the nine policemen who happened to be within fifty yards of the Dizengoff bomber when he blew himself up. Moreover, the bombers have become more difficult to detect. There is evidence they are donning disguises to look like Israelis. When the Dizengoff bomber's severed head was located, it turned out that he had dyed his hair blond. In the Ashkelon bombing on February 25, the bomber wore an Israeli army uniform and an earring in the fashion of many young Israelis. The Beit Lid bombers in January '95 pretended to be blind men. Ayyash himself

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is reputed to have assumed the disguise of an orthodox Jew. Operating in disguise is a technique Hamas learned from an Israeli army unit called "the Mistarivim," which in Hebrew means acting like Arabs. "The Palestinians learned how to use our own methods against us," said one security source.

If Arafat does not crush Hamas and stop the bombings, few doubt that Israeli forces will enter the Gaza Strip. Three weeks ago, Israeli chief of staff Shahak gave Arafat a list of the thirteen Hamas militants Israel believes are responsible for the bombings. Thus far, the top six on the list have not been detained. The most important of these is the Engineer's successor, Mohammed Dief, the alleged organizer of the latest attacks. Yet reliable Palestinian sources report seeing Dief at prayers in a mosque in the Gazan city of Khan Yunis last week. The Shin Bet knows it is unlikely that the Palestinian police will arrest Dief. Growing up in Gaza, his childhood friend was Mohammed Dahlan, now head of Arafat's secret police. The two men renewed their friendship in the 1980s, when they were cellmates in an Israeli prison. A similar conflict of interest pertains in the case of Colonel Jibril Rajoub, Arafat's top police commander in the West Bank, whose brother is a major Hamas Imam.

But it is more than just personal ties that keep Hamas militants at large. Arafat has always been a master of smoke and mirrors, appearing to be doing something without actually doing much of anything. As for his Hamas problem, a Shin Bet analyst says, Arafat needs to appear to be cracking down without actually wrecking his working relationship with the group. Last December, in Cairo, Arafat and Hamas reached a formal understanding that neither side would seek to undermine the other. Arafat has even appointed several Hamas figures to high-level positions in the Palestinian Authority. Now, under pressure to close Hamas down, Arafat pretends there are two parts to the organization: a "political wing" and a "military wing," the so-called Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades that have claimed credit for the bombings in leaflets. It is a variation of the old good cop-bad cop routine. While the Palestinian police search for the bad bombers of Izzedine al-Qassam, Arafat treats Hamas's public face, leaders like Mahmood al-Zahar, as opposition politicians, detaining them briefly in comfortable barracks. But this strategy is dubious even on its own terms. Arafat claims he has posted orders outlawing the Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades, but no one in the Palestinian Authority could produce such a document when asked.

Palestinian and Israeli sources say there is no split within Hamas. What there is, says Ehud Ya'ari of Israeli Television, is "about fifty guys or so who carry out the violence and are known to everyone in Hamas and are part of the organization." Brigadier General Ya'acov Amidror of army intelligence says Arafat could shut down Hamas in a week if he had a mind to. He may not have much longer than that.

TERENCE WRONG is a producer at ABC's "Prime Time Live" who has covered the Middle East for many years.

Another assault on immigration.

BIRTH CONTROL

By Stephen Chapman

Even as you read this, there are Mexican women at pay phones just across the border waiting to go into labor so they can call an American ambulance, walk into the United States, catch a ride to the nearest public hospital and proceed to give birth at public expense. At least that's how Ron Prince tells it. The reason, says the California activist, is simple: the baby automatically becomes an American citizen, entitled to all social welfare benefits, and the mother gains permanent immunity from deportation. Then she can bring in her husband and other children with full legal status, allowing them to further abuse our hospitality.

The story is mostly a mix of mythology and addled reasoning, but it serves to dramatize a political cause. After organizing the successful campaign for Proposition 187, which barred public education and other services to illegal foreigners, Prince was circulating petitions to get another initiative on the ballot in November. At the heart of it was an idea that has been gaining support among those who want to reduce or stop immigration: denying citizenship to children born in the United States to illegal immigrants.

The petition drive fell just short of the number needed to qualify for the ballot, but the issue is far from dead. In Congress, in fact, birthright citizenship, a bedrock national policy since 1866, may be the next major immigration battleground. Though not a part of the current broad and inhospitable rewrite of immigration law introduced by Senator Alan Simpson and Representative Lamar Smith, the issue has already come up in Congress. On December 13, two House subcommittees held a hearing on Representative Brian Bilbray's proposed statute to bar citizenship to children born here if their parents are not citizens or resident legal aliens. Meanwhile, Representatives Elton Gallegly, a Republican, and Anthony Beilenson, a Democrat, both of California, have proposed bills to make the same change by constitutional amendment.

The proposals address a longstanding gripe of those who want to curtail the influx of people from abroad. Peter Brimelow's polemical 1995 book, *Alien Nation*, which gained notoriety for urging that immigration be not only reduced but revamped to bolster the white population, expressed amazement that we let the children of lawbreakers become full-fledged American citizens because of a mere accident of birth. So did Yale

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professors Peter Schuck and Rogers Smith in their more scholarly and temperate 1985 volume, *Citizenship Without Consent*. The anti-immigration Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) favors the change, and executive director Dan Stein finds that it gets raves from the radio call-in crowd. In the climate dramatized by the triumph of Proposition 187, the proposal can't be dismissed as farfetched.

There *is* something annoying about the spectacle of foreigners getting a valuable right by breaking our laws. But enacting a statute to abolish birthright citizenship for the offspring of illegal immigrants, as Bilbray recommends, would be far worse. To begin with, it is almost certainly unconstitutional. The Fourteenth Amendment, adopted to confer full citizenship on black Americans after the Civil War, leaves minimal room for interpretation when it says, "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside." Bilbray finds a blessing for his measure in that middle phrase. Foreigners who come here without the knowledge or consent of the U.S. government, he argues, are not truly "subject to the jurisdiction thereof." Under the Supreme Court's reading, Congress has been allowed to exclude a few classes of U.S.-born people from access to citizenship—children of foreign diplomats, for example.

But minor exceptions are not likely to justify a major one. The Fourteenth Amendment merely codified a longstanding common law rule that nationality was almost invariably determined by birthplace. The Supreme Court held in 1898 that a child born in San Francisco of Chinese parents was automatically an American citizen—which his parents, thanks to the Chinese Exclusion Laws, could never become. The amendment, said the court, "has conferred no authority upon Congress to restrict the effect of birth, declared by the Constitution to constitute a sufficient and complete right to citizenship." Even Schuck, a law professor who spent an entire book arguing that Congress has the power claimed by Bilbray, admits that his is a minority opinion among legal scholars—and that it was implicitly rejected by the Supreme Court in a landmark 1982 case. Testifying before Congress in December, he said that since writing his book he has come to the conclusion that the policy he prefers should be brought about only by constitutional amendment: "So far-reaching a change should not be adopted by a transient majority in Congress."

Putting the measure in the form of a constitutional amendment, however, doesn't fix its other flaws. Prince notes that 70 percent of the births in Los Angeles County's public hospitals are to women here illegally—which proves merely that there is an abundance of illegal immigrants already in the area. Brimelow cites a study which found that 15 percent of Hispanic new mothers in California-border hospitals cross the border just to give birth and that one-fourth of this group did it so the child would be a U.S. citizen. This suggests that for every Mexican mother who comes here to take advantage of birthright citizenship, there are sixteen who come for a different reason. And that says nothing about the men who are here illegally. California hosts an estimated 1.7 million undocumented foreigners, and they produce no more than 100,000 new births each year. The late Barbara Jordan chaired the federal Commission on Immigration Reform, which proposed a number of controversial steps to crack down on illegal immigration. But, at the December hearing, even Jordan testified that there is no evidence that many people come here mainly to get citizenship for their kids.

Besides, Prince's claims about the entitlements that come with bearing a child here are almost entirely fictitious. An illegal immigrant is not allowed to bring other family members to the U.S. just because one of her children is born here. Nor can she claim any legal right to stay. In terms of immigration status, says Ned Lynch, the former director of strategic planning at the Immigration and Naturalization Service, "it doesn't get her anything." If she is picked up by the INS, she will typically be offered "voluntary departure"—a bus ticket across the border, in the case of Mexicans—and, if she refuses, she can expect to be deported. Her citizen children may remain if they can find a guardian to take them in, but most leave with their parents. Only in rare cases, when the children are nearing adulthood after living their entire lives in America, do immigration judges sometimes waive deportation for the parents.

In practice, few of these parents are deported because few illegal immigrants are deported. Most who are apprehended accept voluntary departure—about a million people a year, compared to only about 50,000 who are formally expelled. But most of those who get into the country have little to worry about as long as they stay out of trouble. About 95 percent of the illegal foreigners snared by the authorities are caught at the border. So having a baby here just to stay in the U.S. would mean going to an awful lot of trouble to get something that most illegal immigrants already enjoy: the opportunity to remain indefinitely.

Denying citizenship to such children would do nothing to combat illegal immigration because it would neither discourage illegal immigrants from coming nor make it any easier to catch and expel them. It would, however, create a new class of residents who, despite being born and living their entire lives here, are denied a full place in society, solely as punishment for the sins of their parents—much like the Turks and other foreigners in Germany, which doesn't provide for birthright citizenship. Defining "Germanness" by blood, not place of birth, it makes citizenship available almost exclusively to ethnic Germans, including many born abroad and far removed from any national connection. By this logic, Russians of distant German ancestry find it far easier to get citizenship than third-

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ARE THE BENEFITS OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION WORTH THE COSTS?

Economist Barbara R. Bergmann cuts through the incendiary rhetoric and offers incontrovertible evidence that affirmative action is the only remedy for the continuing discrimination against men and women of all colors in our society. From debunking the myth that blacks or women "always" win at the expense of the white males, to countering the assertion that affirmative action negatively affects its beneficiaries, Bergmann leads readers through the labyrinth of charges and counter-charges to reveal why affirmative action represents the best—and most moral path—to eliminating racial and sexual discrimination.

"Barbara Bergmann...combines good, compassionate sense with first-rate professional competence and a wonderful capacity for getting and organizing the relevant information."
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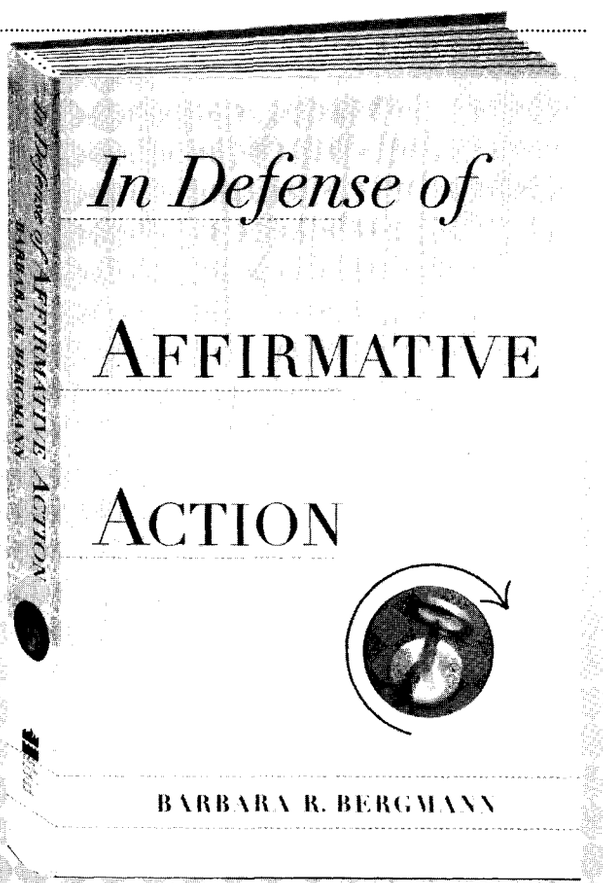
"*In Defense of Affirmative Action* spells out through vivid analogues and examples why affirmative action is still desperately needed to keep the doors of educational and employment opportunities open."
—Eleanor Smeal



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generation "foreigners" who have never set foot outside the country. These immigrants, who began arriving in the 1950s, constitute some 9 percent of Germany's population, but nearly all of them remain aliens. Denying citizenship to children born here to illegal immigrants would produce a similar pool of the legally disadvantaged in the United States, which until now has had an enviable record of assimilating newcomers. And not only would these children be barred from citizenship—so would all their descendants. "Without a birthright citizenship rule or another amnesty, these illegals, their children and their children's children will continue to be outsiders mired in an inferior and illegal status and deprived of the capacities of self-protection and self-advancement," Schuck testified at the hearing.

Denying citizenship to the children of illegal immigrants would not ameliorate the problem it claims to address. In fact, it would more likely fulfill the worst fears of the anti-immigration forces—creating, out of people born within our borders, an unassimilable community of estranged aliens. It's hard to see how that could be an improvement on a policy that, by treating them as Americans, makes them Americans.

STEPHEN CHAPMAN is a syndicated columnist on the staff of *The Chicago Tribune.*

Software for shrinks.

POINT AND CLICK

By Larissa MacFarquhar

A hundred years from now, when some neo-Foucauldian decides to untangle the connections between institutions, sense of self and money in 1990s America, one chapter at least will be devoted to psychotherapy treatment plans. These titillating documents describe in intimate detail what was once confidential: a person's problems and what the therapist intends to do about them—the techniques to be applied and the objectives to be met, session by session. Now that virtually all therapy is conducted within managed care systems, treatment plans have become the currency of the profession: a therapist submits one to a managed care company, which then decides whether or not to approve the techniques and the number of sessions the therapist has asked to be reimbursed for. Later, an account of the plan's effectiveness—methods used, number of sessions, degree of success—is fed into a national database, such as the Medical Information Bureau (MIB) in Massachusetts. The MIB inserts the information into an updated patient history and then distills it into a vast reserve of information about similar cases for statistical analysis.

Drawing up treatment plans takes ages, and a number of new computer programs have appeared on the market to speed up the process, with cheerful names like ShrinkRapt and ClienTell. At the moment, most of these are merely formats into which a therapist can type patient information and all the rest of it. Soon, though, these bare-bones programs will probably be replaced by more sophisticated ones—like TheraScribe, a Windows program just out from John Wiley & Sons. TheraScribe has been cleverly designed to do not only the organizing but also, creepily enough, much of the thinking that goes into plans—and in book form it was Wiley's fastest-selling psychological text ever.

TheraScribe is a software package containing a large database of prewritten statements about problems, diagnoses and cures. "Ask client to make a chart of advantages and disadvantages regarding his/her belief in a higher power," for instance, can be found among the recommended interventions in its "Spiritual Confusion" menu. "Increase the number of positive family interactions by planning activities such as bowling, fishing, playing table games, or doing work projects" is one of the objectives listed under "Family Conflicts." The "Female Sexual Dysfunction" section includes the sensible suggestions, "Assign client to list assets of her body," and, "Give permission for less inhibited sexual behavior by assigning body-pleasuring exercises with partner."

The idea behind the program is that a therapist can plug it into her PC, work through various menus and print out a prefabricated treatment plan without having to think up a word of her own. With TheraScribe, as its promotional blurb declares, "Comprehensive, individualized psychotherapy treatment plans are now just a 'point and click' away!" It may seem like an insidious attempt to hasten therapeutic rationalization. In fact, it's something far simpler: a package designed to help unsophisticated clinicians draw up the kind of plans that pass muster with the now all-important managed care assessors.

TheraScribe originated in the trouble a Salvation Army codependency program in Grand Rapids, Michigan, was having getting itself approved by one of the major medical accrediting agencies. One of the agency's requirements was an individualized treatment plan in every patient's chart. At the time, Arthur E. Jongsma Jr., a Michigan psychologist and TheraScribe's inventor, was working for the clinic as a consultant. Jongsma realized that the treatment-plan requirement entailed not only a fantastic amount of paperwork but also fluency in the peculiar language necessary to convince accrediting agencies and HMOs that the clinic's therapists knew how to play the managed care game by the rules.

"The therapist might write, for example, 'I want to improve the patient's self-esteem,' " Jongsma explained over the phone. "Who-oah! Insurance companies don't *like* that kind of language. They want to hear that you're going to improve his interaction with his family, that

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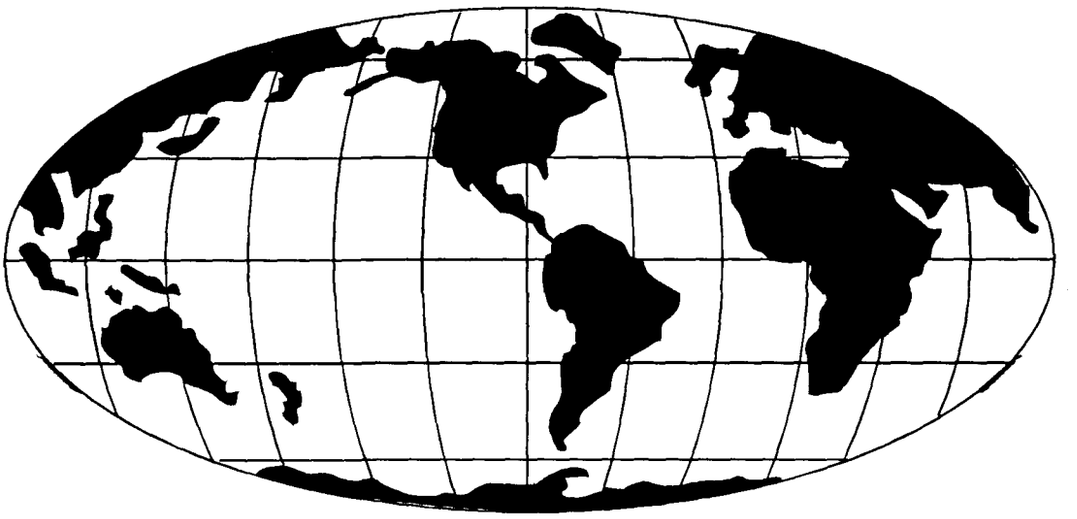

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he'll be able to verbalize more positive statements about himself, that he will demonstrate better grooming and hygiene habits—you know, things that are reflective of self-esteem but are more measurable. So that's what we tried to do with TheraScribe—put statements in nice, concise, behavioral language so that insurance companies and managed care organizations are more likely to fund the treatment."

TheraScribe, like most therapy under managed care, is basically a behaviorist system. Of course, behaviorism has come a long way since the days of Wolpe and Skinner—it's still based on learning and observable behavior, but it has expanded far beyond the old *Clockwork Orange*-style stimulus-response experiments. Nineties behaviorism is largely a matter of concentrating on the here-and-now manifestations of dysfunction, rather than its roots, and emphasizing patient self-reliance at the expense of the therapeutic relationship. It rests on the assumption that while humans are not computers—conceivable in terms of stimulus inputs and behavior outputs—it is sometimes clinically useful to treat them as though they were.

Managed care has forced most therapists to use techniques that conform to behaviorist requirements—ones with measurable outcomes whose efficacy has been proven. But, within that framework, the average clinician doesn't confine herself to any one doctrine but takes an "eclectic" (the '70s buzzword) or "integrative" (the '90s one) approach, mixing and matching various procedures depending on the disorder.

TheraScribe is designed to accommodate this eclecticism. Its intervention menu for phobias, for instance, includes all kinds of techniques, from the traditionally behavioral ("Direct systematic desensitization procedures to reduce phobic response") to the cognitive ("Identify distorted schemas and related automatic thoughts that mediate anxiety"), from the psychodynamic ("Probe and interpret possible symbolic meaning to the phobia stimulus object") to the pharmacological ("Arrange for the prescription of psychotropic medications"). Other menus include bibliotherapy: assigned reading from self-help books like *Ten Days to Self-Esteem!* and *Healing the Child Within.*

As a result, TheraScribe is capable of generating all kinds of therapeutic combinations—and, psychotherapy still being a rather motley profession, treatment plans do tend to vary a lot. But this is where databases like the Medical Information Bureau's come in. Analyzing thousands of treatment records, MIB computers calculate the efficiency (measured in speed as well as effectiveness) of various therapeutic methods for different disorders. The results of these analyses are sent back to gatekeepers at managed care companies, who use them to decide whether to approve particular treatment interventions. As evidence from these analyses becomes more conclusive, all but the speediest (and thus cheapest) procedures get weeded out of managed care's accepted repertoire—as most long- and medium-term methods have been already.

Of course, there's nothing like lowering your expectations for getting the job done faster. And techniques acceptable to managed care companies tend to aim low. Take TheraScribe's list of treatment goals for patients with depression. Some of them sound pretty good—"Develop the ability to recognize, accept, and cope with feelings of depression," "Alleviate depressed mood and return to previous level of effective functioning"—but, if you look closer, you notice that these are the "Long-Term Goals." Long-term goals are not what the therapist expects to achieve in her six sessions—just concepts for the patient to aim for in the unspecified future.

The therapy itself focuses only on "Short-Term Objectives," and none of these sounds especially transformative—"Take prescribed medicines responsibly at times ordered by physician," or "State he/she no longer has thoughts of self-harm." These kinds of "objectives" are in fact not ends at all but means—and thus the definition of "successful therapy" has become rather circular since its short-term goal now seems to be simply that therapy should take place. It's because managed care limits its ambitions like this that it can claim its treatments have *proved* to be effective. Meanwhile, the old-fashioned types of therapy that persist in aiming for big, amorphous goals like autonomy and personality transformation are made to look unscientific and snail-like by comparison.

Many therapists, especially the psychodynamically oriented ones (those who still use Freudian concepts like the unconscious, repression and transference) view this progressively standardized future as therapeutic Armageddon. Faced with the prospect of conforming to a system that cuts short their treatment and overrides their judgment, they're rebelling against managed care in a variety of ways—holding panicky conferences, starting lobbying groups. A quixotic few are refusing to participate at all and are limiting their practice to patients who pay them directly.

It seems clear, though, that these few are going to be the losers and that, with the exception of a few hundred moneyed, true-believing Freudians, patients from now on are going to experience therapy as managed care chooses to construct it. One wonders whether this change—the gradual replacement of psychodynamic therapy by loosely conceived behaviorism—will affect the American sense of self as profoundly as the introduction of Freudian concepts to this country did ninety years ago. It already seems likely that in a couple of decades terms like "the unconscious" and "repressed" will be less common than terms like "dysfunctional" and "anger management." And, who knows, maybe people will even put complicated psychic conflicts behind them altogether and begin to check off "short-term objectives" like the ones listed in TheraScribe. On Monday, say, a person could "Begin to show limited social functioning by responding appropriately to friendly encounters." And, on Tuesday, he could "Replace concept of higher power as harsh and judgmental with one where higher power is accepting, forgiving, and loving."

LARISSA MACFARQUHAR is a contributing editor at *Lingua Franca.*

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MOSCOW POSTCARD

PRIME SUSPECT

By Masha Gessen

As befits a 21-year-old with an incongruously responsible job—he is some sort of manager at a small Moscow company—Pasha always wears a suit. On weekends and holidays, too—always the same gray two-piece that makes him look even skinnier, even taller and, yes, a couple of years older. The jacket's ill fit isn't helped by the handgun stuck inside the waistband of his trousers. Pasha maintains he is in a training course run by Interpol's Moscow agency, though that's not the reason he carries a gun. He is a contract killer.

He got into the business less than three years ago, after his fiancée was raped and murdered. Pasha and the girl's brother conducted their own investigation and found the culprit: a Chechen man, whom they promptly killed. Their victim was, naturally, a mafioso, so they had to protect themselves against retaliation, which is how they came to sell their souls to the head of an ethnic-Russian organized-crime group. Pasha claims to have killed seven people for him. He says he makes his victims' acquaintance so that he can shoot them in private; he says most have been surprised that someone so young is killing them.

In all likelihood, he is lying—though it's true that he carries a gun and, near as I can tell, that his fiancée was murdered a couple of years ago and that her brother was recently found dead, too. True or not, though, his story is an artifact of the times, marked by real danger, magnified and distorted beyond measure by fear and the stories to which fear gives life. So let's take the Pasha story, top to bottom, as the artifact it is.

Pasha wears a suit over his gun, and that probably helps ward off the police. But there's another reason he is able to walk unmolested through the streets of Moscow in illegal possession of a gun: his Slavic good looks, his wide cheekbones, green eyes and light brown hair. For everyone knows that crime in general, and organized crime in particular, is the domain of dark-haired, swarthy people from the Caucasus, especially Chechens. Opinion polls show that 60 percent of Russians believe the Chechens are to be feared as bandits, though only 2 percent say they personally have met a Chechen.

In one day last weekend I watched two crime programs on television. The first, a stylish report on a women's self-defense class, had the instructor explaining, "These moves are important to know. I was recently taking a group of women students to the countryside, and some Caucasian started making passes at one of them. So I had to take him out by hitting him with the side of my hand in the back of the head, where the brain is not protected." The second, a weekly program called "Operation," a sort of Russian "Cops" that features taped reports from real-life police busts, showed the cops breaking into an apartment, which, they had learned, "is occupied by Caucasians. There are drugs and weapons."

The police found no drugs or weapons, and the hapless occupants of the apartment had documents that checked out. They were detained anyway, and, what's more, the tape was aired on television: maybe the mere fact of swarthy people renting an apartment in Moscow is frightening enough. Most likely, Pasha's search for his fiancée's assailant was guided by the same logic.

In a press conference on February 21, the head of the Moscow police investigative unit declared that "most crimes are committed by people from the Caucasus." Naturally, all the dailies printed the statement on their obsessively read crime pages. When I called the Moscow police headquarters to get the exact figures, however, I discovered that, to its credit, the office does not break crime statistics down by ethnic groups. What they could tell me was that every third crime in Moscow was committed by a non-Muscovite—which, considering that on any given day there are as many visitors in the capital as there are residents, means that non-Muscovites are three times less likely to break the law in the city.

Within the vicious circle formed by police misinformation and its media reflection you can find Russia's anti-crime policies. In keeping with the unshakable belief that all crimes are committed by strangers, the most precious institution the police are called upon to protect is the battered but unbroken Soviet passport regime, which makes it illegal for people to spend more than a few days in a city where they are not registered to live. Andrei Babushkin, a human rights activist and former member of the Moscow city council, has done some calculations on the basis of interviews with visitors to the Moscow Research Center for Human Rights over the course of last year. Babushkin concluded that each of Moscow's 7.5 million adults has his documents checked an average of three times a year. Figuring that Moscow has 100,000 police working 200 days a year, Babushkin concluded that 1,000 police officers did nothing but check documents all year. In 1995, document checks yielded 150 violations, or one violation per seven dedicated policemen.

But back to Pasha. I've asked: he has never had his documents checked in the street—though, as a 21-year-old ethnic Russian male without higher education, he is statistically more likely to commit a crime than is a member of any other group. Whereas, for example, I, a 29-year-old educated Jewish woman, am more likely to die from having an icicle fall on my head than I am to break the law. I estimate that I have my documents checked an average

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of 300 times a year. Because I am a woman and an accredited journalist, I am usually let free after a few minutes with nary a fine; if I were a man from the Caucasus, I would most likely be held and beaten by the police for several hours. Still, some days I am stopped on every street corner. Why? As one officer told me, "Your essence, your substance—well, you don't look Russian!"

Despite my appearance, I am not a member of an organized-crime group, though I do seem to know someone who is. I have briefly considered and rejected the idea of turning my acquaintance in to the police. If he is not a mafioso but a braggart, he'll still be a godsend to the cops, under ever more pressure to rack up organized-crime cases. Since 1994, the police have had essentially unlimited powers to violate the Constitution in the guise of fighting organized crime: a recent presidential decree allows the police to hold people without charges for thirty days and to conduct searches without a warrant in certain cases. Still, apparent mafia crimes, like the murders of more than forty bankers in 1995, continue to go unsolved. And, though the latest statistics show that criminal acts attributed to gangsters declined in 1995, the overall crime rate in the Moscow area is up by an alarming 6.5 percent over 1994. A megalomaniacal boy and a couple of his gun-toting friends could help any police precinct improve its number of collars.

If, on the other hand, Pasha (which is, of course, not his real name) is really a contract killer, and I turn him in, I am dead meat. Local police precincts are ordinary links in organized-crime chains. An entrepreneur friend once detailed for me his troubles upon first encountering a protection racket. The representatives of a local group demanded $2,000 a month. He approached a different group, which agreed to protect him from the first for $2,000 a month provided the aggressors weren't "Chinese mafia." A third group set similar conditions but excluded the "Georgian mafia." The police asked for $2,000 and no Chechens. Finally, he found a private security firm owned by former and current KGB staff that agreed to protect him against everyone for a slightly higher fee.

Around the same time that my friend was mafia-shopping, President Yeltsin was presenting his anti-Constitution, anti-crime decree and Chief Prosecutor Aleksei Ilyushenko was touting new, more effective investigations and a crackdown on organized crime. Last month, less than two years later, Ilyushenko was arrested and brought up on charges of abusing his power in connection with an alleged crime scheme engineered by his son-in-law. On March 12 a Moscow daily published an article asserting that, after Ilyushenko gave testimony implicating people in or around the federal government, he was brutally beaten by his cellmate. The same day, Ilyushenko's lawyer and the interior ministry denied everything. In all likelihood, someone is lying again. But this story, too, is an artifact.

MASHA GESSEN is a staff writer for *Itogi* (*Conclusions*), a weekly news magazine in Russia.

The CIA under siege.

SPY VS. SPY

By Joseph Finder

They mean well, they really do, all those mandarins of foreign policy who've been sitting on "blue-ribbon" panels over the last year or so, deciding the future of American intelligence now that the Soviet Union is no longer.

Their latest wisdom was dispensed on Friday, March 1, when the Presidential Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the United States Intelligence Community—the Brown-Aspin Commission—released its long-awaited findings. A large number of very smart people toiled long and hard on this 200-page *pronunciamento.* But, in the great tradition of blue-ribbon panels, the Brown-Aspin Commission has generated something utterly anodyne and carefully skimmed of all controversy, "bipartisan" to the point of meaninglessness.

You will search the report very hard to find any mention of that $6 billion-a-year beast, the National Reconnaissance Office, which builds spy satellites—and which recently misplaced $2 billion (the CIA's budget, for comparison's sake, is $3 billion annually). The gutsiest recommendation the panel makes is that the total amount of the secret intelligence budget be made public—no breakdowns, just the bottom-line figure. (It's around $28 billion, the worst-kept secret in Washington.) Just a few weeks ago, another blue-ribbon panel, this one from the Council on Foreign Relations, published its sage advice, and it was even more vacuous, kicking up a controversy only when inaccurate press reports claimed the Council had recommended relaxing CIA rules forbidding operatives to pose as journalists, which they already can. And, while the Wise Men were talking the talk, the espiocrats were stealthily making their own "reforms," the only ones that count.

Unless you're an intelligence junkie, you probably missed a leak that surfaced in the press last year about a brand-new intelligence agency called the DHS, or Defense Humint Service ("humint," a particularly ugly example of espiocratese, means human intelligence, the information gathered by spies). The new venture, it seemed, was actually a merger of the human-intelligence operations that for decades had been fragmented among the various armed services, mostly the Army. Nothing new here, DHS sources insist. The Pentagon has always had its defense attaché system, whereby military officers serve as liaisons in U.S. Embassies, openly collecting military information. And, sure, once in a while the military has engaged in short-term,

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operation-specific gigs, like sending undercover operatives to Panama in 1989, equipped with German passports, to try to track down Manuel Noriega. A black op or two in Somalia, Haiti, Liberia—but always directly connected to impending military operations. No news here. The DHS is nothing more than a consolidation designed to cut overhead, save money, streamline. But that's not quite true.

We are, I think, witnessing the beginnings of a significant shift in the decades-long bureaucratic war between the CIA and the Department of Defense. You no longer hear much about the proposals made by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and others in the months after the Soviet empire crumbled to disband the CIA. Instead, we're witnessing the slow and steady erosion of the once-powerful agency, to the benefit of the Pentagon. And this may turn out to be even worse than the admittedly unsatisfactory situation we have now.

Flushed with victory after Desert Storm, its prestige enhanced by the Bosnia operations, the Defense Department has become a ferocious antagonist of the Aldrich Ames-weakened CIA. "The CIA's on its knees," one former director of Central Intelligence told me, "and everyone's piling on." The Pentagon may soon be taking over a massive new intelligence imagery agency, subsuming the CIA's vaunted National Photo Interpretation Center.

To those intelligence apparatchiks who keep score (which means almost all of them), *The Washington Post* got it exactly right when it headlined a recent report on the DOD's new power "PENTAGON GAINING TURF FROM THE CIA." Yet what kind of turf war can it be if CIA Director John Deutch *supports* the recent shifts of CIA responsibilities to Defense?

Ah, some of my Agency friends mutter darkly, exactly. Deutch was number two at the Pentagon, famously loyal to his former boss, Defense Secretary William Perry, before he was dragged, kicking and screaming, to the CIA. He's still "their" guy.

But whether that's true or not, the Defense Humint Service certainly represents the Pentagon's assault on the CIA's historic monopoly over the clandestine collection of intelligence—recruiting agents in foreign countries, using phony businesses as cover, the sort of thing the CIA is known for and, for all its recent bungling, is quite skilled at. In a little-noticed item in the 1996 Intelligence Authorization Act, the DHS is given a highly unusual and intriguing power—"to initiate intelligence commercial activities to provide cover security to intelligence collection activities undertaken abroad by the Defense Department." In essence, the Pentagon's spies will no longer have to admit they work for the government.

Using case officers with non-official cover (NOCs, they're called) is once again in vogue, particularly in Congress. The two great post-cold-war intelligence concerns are terrorism and the illicit nuclear trade. Yet the classic system of having your spies operating semi-openly out of embassies doesn't do much good in these areas, the conventional wisdom goes, since terrorists and nuclear smugglers tend not to mingle on the diplomatic circuit. You have a better chance of penetrating a plutonium-smuggling ring if your cover is as a physicist, say, or the owner of a shady import-export firm.

The trouble is, it's enormously expensive to place NOCs in the field. It's difficult to find people who are experienced in the cover job, it takes a lot of money to set up these dummy companies, and it's tricky to manage them. And it's politically risky these days, particularly as the U.S. increasingly collects information on countries that are, or were, friendly. The potential for mishaps is great: NOCs have no diplomatic immunity. A case officer risks jail, even death.

There's a reason the National Security Act of 1947 gave the CIA a monopoly over espionage collection—even though that law has been ignored for decades. To have more than one U.S. government agency operating undercover case officers in foreign countries is an organizational disaster in the making. "They'll be tripping all over each other," a senior CIA official told me, "attempting to recruit the same sources." It would be darkly comic if it didn't involve the lives of innocents.

The military intelligence officials I've spoken with insist that there's nothing to worry about; there's an extensive coordination system in place, both in Washington and "in country." But the more you peer into that coordination system, the clearer it is that this is a highly problematic, inchoate area. If you talk to Pentagon intelligence officials, they'll assure you that the CIA's in charge, that they coordinate everything with the CIA. After all, the head of the CIA is the director of *all* central intelligence, he's the coordinator of each of the thirteen intelligence agencies—including those in the Pentagon.

In theory. In reality, the Department of Defense controls at least 80 percent of the $28 billion intelligence budget. According to recent figures, the Pentagon has some 13,000 intelligence analysts, compared to 1,500 at the CIA.

By granting the Pentagon the unprecedented right to engage in the clandestine collection of intelligence abroad, we are simply reliving the mistakes made decades ago. Immediately after World War II, the newly formed CIA ran an organization called the Office of Special Operations, which kept butting heads with the Office of Policy Coordination, created in 1948 to conduct covert activities and controlled by State and Defense. The result was duplication of effort and constant bungling until the director of Central Intelligence, General Walter Bedell Smith, finally merged the two offices in 1952.

The CIA has faced ferocious opposition from the military over its presumptive monopoly on the clandestine collection business since its earliest days. But now the Defense Department not only has the resources to do its own snooping, it has a rationale: the CIA is no good at military intelligence.

And there's something to that argument. According to an intriguing document recently posted on the Inter-

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net by a former CIA analyst, John A. Gentry, in the late 1980s, when Bosnia was part of Yugoslavia, the CIA destroyed most of its files on the Yugoslav military. The only two CIA analysts expert in this field quit in frustration. Then, when the trouble in Bosnia started, the CIA had virtually no files—and no analysts.

But the most common justification for the Pentagon's expansion into the spy business turns out to be a straw man. The CIA, according to mutterings from the Defense Department, blew it in the Gulf war. General Norman Schwarzkopf publicly berated the Agency (and the whole intelligence community) for failing him in Desert Storm. But he was wrong.

Schwarzkopf was furious about two things. One was a bitter dispute between the Pentagon and the Agency over battle damage assessment. When the smoke had cleared, it turned out that the Agency's assessments were considerably more accurate. The other bone of contention had to do with overhead photography and military imagery; Schwarzkopf railed that the imagery didn't get to military commanders in the desert fast enough. He was right, but the fault lay with the Pentagon, not the Agency. The imagery got to Riyadh just fine, but it didn't get out to the field quickly because the various systems for disseminating military imagery didn't communicate with one another. Nevertheless, the CIA emerged from the Gulf war the loser of a bureaucratic zero-sum game.

And then there's the last time the Pentagon tried its hand at spookery. In 1980, furious over the botched attempt to free the American hostages in Iran, certain Army officers set up a mini-CIA in the basement of the Pentagon called, with high military euphemism, the Intelligence Support Activity (ISA). Officially, it didn't exist. Funded with $20 million diverted from the Pentagon's black budget, the ISA quickly expanded to some 300 officers who were trained in tradecraft, supplied with false passports, fake Social Security numbers and so on. They went to work setting up private companies as fronts, establishing safehouses and caches for money and weapons, recruiting local agents around the world.

The existence of the Intelligence Support Activity was first made public in 1983, when it was revealed that the unit had been engaged in a number of illegal, clandestine activities. Four courts-martial, and a lot of bad press, ensued. A scandal involving a special unit set up by the Army to provide operational security for the ISA finally hit the news. The unit, code-named Yellow Fruit, was given unlimited funding and located in a suite of offices in Annandale, Virginia, under the guise of a private international consulting firm called Business Security International. Its agents (and their spouses) traveled the world first class, driving Rolls-Royces, spending freely, diverting funds for personal use and padding expense accounts. (They once tried to gather a bunch of CIA and senior Pentagon officials at the Twin Bridges Marriott in Arlington, get them drunk, then bug their hotel rooms and bathrooms to gather damaging information to use for bureaucratic leverage.)

Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger vowed to terminate the ISA at once but ran into fierce opposition from the Army and was eventually persuaded to rescind his termination order. Then, as now, the director of the CIA supported the existence of this clandestine agency: William Casey, always scamming for another way to bypass Congress, was an early booster of the ISA. Then, as now, questions were raised within the bureaucracy about why we needed two organizations doing clandestine human intelligence. Then, as now, the Army's justification for getting into this line of work was that the CIA didn't provide enough logistical support.

Though Congress was under the impression that the ISA had been shut down ("I thought we killed that snake," said a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee a few years later), it continued to exist. In fact, the old ISA exists to this day, in some form, under another name. What happened to it? I asked one very well-informed former military intelligence official. "It went away," he replied tersely. What's taken its place? "I can't talk about that."

Supporters of the new Defense Humint Service argue that all sorts of controls are in place now, that Yellow Fruit couldn't happen again, and they may be right. Yet it's hard to imagine that any information clandestinely gathered by the military won't be filtered through the military policy apparatus, skewed in favor of whatever spending priority the Secretary of Defense happens to favor. And those who are wary of the CIA's activities around the world should be twice as wary of the much lower-profile, much more secretive—and historically less accountable—Department of Defense.

The DHS's defenders, in Congress and in the Pentagon, argue that only a tiny portion of its roughly 1,000 personnel will be involved in clandestine collection—20 percent or so, for now. They compare this to the 4,500 in the CIA's Operations Directorate (though fewer than 1,000 of them are covert operatives who recruit and handle secret agents overseas). We're a small operation, the DHS people say. Anyway, it's a new world, the cold war is over, and we've got to restructure the intelligence community. The CIA was created to fight the Soviet Union, and now the evil empire is gone.

No doubt we need to make serious changes in the way America collects intelligence—we've needed to do so for decades already—but it's a grave error to base those changes on a myth, even a convenient one. The CIA, after all, was *not* founded to combat the Soviet Union. It was created by the National Security Act of 1947 in a bold attempt to respond to, and remedy, the chaos in which American intelligence found itself during World War II—the endless turf battles between the Army and the Navy, the fractured intelligence system. And now, fifty years later, we're once again trying to reinvent American intelligence, and it looks like we're also about to reinvent the same mistakes.

JOSEPH FINDER, who writes frequently about security issues, is the author of the forthcoming novel *The Zero Hour* (William Morrow).

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BLUE-COLLAR BLUES

By Michael Lewis

March 15:

As a rule, you can judge the strength and depth of a political movement by how long it takes you to stumble upon its ringleaders at one of their events. Within about thirty seconds of arriving at a gathering of Detroit auto workers who support Pat Buchanan—Citizens For Better Government, they call themselves—I find myself at a restaurant table with the two men who run the show. They are the only two auto workers who have turned up, at least for the moment. The first one, named Gordon, hands me a flyer headlined "UAW RANK AND FILE BEHIND BUCHANAN" that lists the names of the thirteen auto workers who have "endorsed" Buchanan. The second one, Henry, turns out to be the real leader of this cryptic force. He's a huge, pale man, maybe 55 years old, who sits across from me and glares as if I'm the enemy, which I slowly become. "How many people are involved in this movement?" I ask him.

"We don't discuss that," he says. "It's national."

"Well," I say, "who is the head of it, nationally?"

"We don't discuss that," he says.

"What trades do the members belong to?"

"We don't discuss that."

At that point I drop my grilled lamb hoagie onto the plate and say, "Well, look, what's the point of organizing into a political movement if you won't discuss it?" He blinks for a moment and then says, "We don't discuss that, either."

The force of Henry's view of the world as a conspiracy against him and his fellows is such that I have to close my eyes and remind myself that I'm not interviewing a militiaman. "Does any of your movement favor Ross Perot?" I ask, on a hunch. "The true grassroots people abandoned Ross Perot," says Henry, angrily emerging from his shell. "It's the opportunists and the gullibles that stayed with him."

At length Buchanan arrives and shakes hands with his blue-collar following. He doesn't give them much of a speech, maybe because there aren't a whole lot of them to talk to; but he does offer up a version of the passage that he has worked into his routine to appeal to the politically self-conscious working man. It is a curious thing to hear, coming as it does from the mouth of a Reaganite:

> Someone has got to stand up for the working men and women of America who don't have no representatives at these trade negotiations where they decide what industries are going to live and what are gonna die. It is wrong to negotiate trade deals for the benefit of transnational corporations that encourage them to shut down their plants in Toledo and Youngstown and to open up a plant in Singapore or China because that takes away jobs from American workers and hollows out our manufacturing base.
>
> Look, we won World War II. You know why? We had great generals like MacArthur and Patton. And admirals like Nimitz. We had great soldiers, great American soldiers. But we also had this great industrial heartland of America. The productive capacity of this nation. And it is being gutted and hollowed out. We went up to Youngstown, Ohio. We went up along that river, the Mahoning Valley. Steel mills. Factories. *Gone. Dead.* Shut down for fifteen years. Take a look. Take a look at what we were and what we are. Those are the dying husks of what almost appears to be a dying civilization.

About six years ago I found myself seated across the table from Buchanan on "Crossfire." He attacked me for what he perceived to be my ambivalence toward capitalism. But even then you could see that, like all social conservatives, he didn't know quite which way to jump in the marketplace. The two biggest ambitions of the social conservative are to prevent change and to rein in human desire; the market is uniquely designed to facilitate change and to satisfy desire. On the one hand Buchanan couldn't bear to believe that the economic policies and attitudes promoted by his beloved Ronald Reagan had led to anything but good; on the other hand Buchanan was clearly disturbed by the corporate upheaval orchestrated by Wall Street financiers. It was only a matter of time before he was forced to choose. Now he has.

After the rally, if you could call it that, I drive down the road past the prison to Flint, to the GM truck and bus assembly plant, which is busy shutting down in response to the Ohio strike. Every fifteen minutes or so seemingly gleeful workers come sprinting out the side door, like kids let out of school early, and race to their cars and pickup trucks. I make my way to the UAW local across the street, number 659. Inside the beige brick building I find a man with a rakish pompadour sitting behind a desk, chewing the fat with a buddy on the other side. He insists that under no circumstances

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will he grant me an interview. I tell him where I've just been and with whom.

"They're not part of the UAW," he says.

"Oh yes they are," I say and show him the flyer listing their names and union affiliation to prove it.

"Not if they support Pat Buchanan, they're not," he says. "Or, if they are, they are mentally deranged. Got to see a psychiatrist." His buddy chuckles and adds, "Maybe their medical will cover it."

I exit by the front door past the sign that says WELCOME TO THE UAW LOCAL and walk around the back to the parking lot. There on the wall of the building is a sign. It reads: THE PARKING OF ANY FOREIGN MADE AUTOS ON LOCAL 659 PROPERTY IS ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED. VIOLATORS WILL HAVE THEIR AUTOS TOWED AT THEIR OWN PERSONAL EXPENSE—JOINT COUNCIL.

That evening I drive north out of Detroit away from the American working man and toward the upper one half of 1 percent of Americans who are doing better than ever. Just when you think that houses could not possibly grow bigger you reach a gated enclave in Grosse Pointe Farms, between the hunt club and the country club, where the Fords and the Strohs have settled into their gorgeous ruts. The address I have for Morry Taylor—number 260—does not appear to exist, so I pick the biggest pile of bricks I can find and roll up the driveway. But as I leave the car and approach the door a voice from behind pulls me up short.

"Wrong house, Speed!"

I turn to find first a large bronze sculpture of a grizzly bear and, behind that, the chief executive officer of Titan Wheel International. He's standing in a polo shirt on his ample porch with a glass of red wine in one hand and a cigar in the other. "That looks too small to be yours," I say, pointing at the impressive piece of real estate behind him. "Yeah," he shouts, "but I got three of them." And he does. Two big ones on the road and a smaller one at the back of the property, which houses the gym and the racquetball court.

I am here in part because I somehow cannot stay away but also because Morry's business interests have magically intersected with the Buchanan campaign. Every time Pat Buchanan opens a newspaper in the Midwest he finds new evidence to support his theory of American decline. His most recent piece of evidence is not the GM strike—which he is choosing to ignore—but the announcement that McLouth Steel of Detroit is on the brink of bankruptcy. Thirteen-hundred manufacturing jobs are about to go up in smoke, and Buchanan will soon be hammering away at McLouth as an example of what is wrong with America. "I went out and looked into those mighty steel mills," he will say, "and they have vanished. All the way from Willow Run to McLouth Steel." But if you read to the end of the stories about McLouth Steel you see that there is still some small possibility of a future for the company. Morry Taylor is trying to buy it.

His swift exit from politics has only increased Morry's contempt for politicians and people who write about them. He is quick to explain to me, for instance, why I stand no chance whatsoever of understanding the American worker. "If you want to know what they think," he says, "you have to go spend half a day on the production line. At first they'll only tell you all the good things—they don't tell you their problems. Then you hear what they're gonna spend their money on when they get a raise—how they're really gonna buy them a nice pair a tennis shoes. Or maybe they're gonna take their kids to the country fair. Things that if you had to do them you would think: *I gotta do this boring thing?*"

Why he is after McLouth is unclear. His chief financial backer told him that buying it "took more guts than brains," and his chief strategist has sent him a memo that concludes, "it is not a wise decision to buy McLouth Steel." He takes both as a good sign—if everyone says that it is as bad as all that maybe it's good. At any rate he has just spoken with McLouth's creditors, who have told him that the company, which has been operating under Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, has just enough cash to keep on making steel. But after he met with the creditors he met with the union, which was not so sanguine.

March 16:

I wake up in the deep goose-down bed in one of the Taylor homes, aware that in the past few weeks I have gone from being Morry Taylor's Boswell to Pat Buchanan's Leni Riefenstahl, and back again. But what can you do when you are faced with a choice between a nominee doing his best to avoid engaging with anyone outside of the Senate and a pair of losers who are busy grappling with the billion-footed beast? The beast is already up and stalking about on the top of the front page of the *Detroit News* and *Free Press*: "MCLOUTH STEEL IS BROKE AND CLOSING," it reads in the sort of big, bold letters normally reserved for acts of war. "It means they gotta move real fast," says Morry, shedding his gaudy bathrobe on his way up the stairs. Then he adds, "I'm a lucky guy."

A few minutes later he's tossed on his Lucky's Grizzly Beer pullover with the head of a snarling grizzly bear on the back, and we're off to the factory at speed. After a quick stop for cigars, we are soon on a stretch of road overlooking an industrial wasteland—belching smokestacks and slumbering rail yards as far as the eye can see. A few miles later, we come upon a lovely stretch of the Detroit River and beside it McLouth Steel. It's a truly awful-looking place. Unlike, say, an investment bank, where a casual visitor would never detect even the most dire financial problems, a bankrupt factory *looks* bankrupt. The windows are busted out of the side of the mill, and the scrap yard is a moonscape of desolation. But the outside, it turns out, is the best of it.

Morry talks his way past the guard house and into the red brick building beside the mill that houses management, when management isn't kicking back in its

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fancier building down the road. On the bulletin board beside the beleaguered-looking office is a memo to the workers, imploring them to work harder. "8 HOURS WORK FOR 8 HOURS PAY" it says, only someone has scratched out the second 8 and replaced it with a 4. Morry marches in to conduct a not entirely pleasant interview with the current chief executive—who has false hopes of keeping his job. I take off for the mill.

Immediately upon entering I sense that I have walked into a place where I do not belong and that if I take a wrong step some mobile machine or flying steel beam will correct me. But the moment the workers discover that I came with Morry Taylor ("I'll vote for him if he buys the place," one shouts over the din) I cease to be a nuisance and become an object of intense interest. They find me a hard hat and start asking me what's going to happen to them—next week will be their first without a paycheck. Though it quickly becomes clear that I have no idea, a small group of them, led by a man named Jim, takes me by the hand and shows me what's left of a company that once employed nearly 6,000 workers. Jim, who has worked for McLouth for thirty-seven years, wears a red-and-white skull cap over his Medusa hair, which grows down into an equally unruly beard. He has a hacking cough, and his face is flushed pink with overexposure. From tip to toe he is covered with grime in a way he wasn't ten years back, he says, when McLouth had the money to keep the mill clean. A few months ago he broke his foot, he says, and he waited for a bit to go into the hospital because "I was ashamed by what the nurses would think when they saw me."

The tour starts in the lunch room—a metal cell in the center of the mill which, though perfectly disgusting with grime, is at least quiet. It proceeds to the men's room: a ten-by-twelve cesspool with two inches of mucky water on the floor in which swim rubber gloves, shards of sandwiches, rusty nails and coils of steel. There are no doors on the two stalls, no seats on the two toilets and no handles on the two faucets—a problem solved by running the water constantly. In the plant itself, Jim tells me, if the machinery were not so simple it would never be working. As it is he has spent the better part of the past ten years cannibalizing working machines for parts to keep other machines going. "We're in here scrounging for nuts and bolts," he says, "and they're out there building a new office building for themselves."

The inside of a steel mill—or at any rate this steel mill—looks like an aircraft hangar into which someone has randomly dumped a lot of big, greasy, outdated machinery. In the summer it is hotter than the air outside; in winter, because of the wind tunnel that it creates, it is colder. When the machinery is working—as it was when I entered—it creates enough noise that if you want to be heard by your neighbor you have to shout into his ear. Any luck that befalls the man who works with these machines is bad luck. In his thirty-seven years Jim has seen more than thirty workers killed, and he starts to list the most common causes of death: crushed by machinery, gassed, electrocuted, burned to death by hydraulic fuel. Still, these are the heavy-industry, good jobs every politician says he wants to create—and that Jim wants to keep.

If ever there was a place where Pat Buchanan's message would be heard, here is it. But how in this context do you drag anyone's thoughts toward politics? With a weary sense of duty I ask a question about Buchanan. And with a weary sense of duty Jim says that "there are probably a couple of guys here who'll go vote for Buchanan, but I don't know who they are." Jim reads *Time* and *Newsweek* and knows something about the election. But he hasn't thought twice about how national politics might relate to his immediate predicament. Why should he?

Later, in Morry's car, I ask him a little stupidly what happens to the workforce once the place shuts down. "They'll sit around," he says. "There will be more divorce. Some kids'll get the hell kicked out of 'em. Some women will get the hell kicked out of 'em. Some of them will get jobs—the skilled guys. But in the next round of layoffs they'll be the first to be let go. It creates a tragedy."

He pauses. "Go ask the Christian Coalition what should be done right now."

March 17:

The South Side Chicago St. Patrick's Day parade is yet another blue-collar event to which I would normally be dragged kicking and screaming. The chance to march beside Pat Buchanan clad in a union jacket proves irresistible, however. Buchanan was initially blocked from participating in the parade, but then the local 150 union of Operating Engineers—the guys behind the wheel of cranes and forklifts—stepped in and invited him to march alongside him. Why they did this depends on whom you ask. The portly plumber who glowers at Pat at the start of the parade says that it was a publicity stunt for Bill Dugan, the union president, who gets to march alongside Pat and be interviewed by journalists. Dugan says it was because Buchanan is "the only guy who has the guts to stand up and talk about our issues." Whatever the case, Buchanan is resplendent in his shamrock-green turtleneck, Jackie Stewart checkered racing cap and black jacket with "PAT" stenciled across the pocket and the union logo. *Labor Omnia Vincit*, it says. As he starts marching down the black asphalt beneath the clover-strewn lampposts it is easy to overlook his pinstriped slacks and black wing-tips.

It is never very dignified trailing around behind one of these people, but today marks a new low for the Buchanan journalists. Six parade volunteers use a thin rope to shepherd the press pool and keep the journalists out in front of, but not too close to, Buchanan. The effect is similar to the running of the bulls in Pamplona. The journalists tease the rope, trying to get as close as possible without being knocked over. The rope, for its part, is unpredictable and forever changing speed. One moment there is something like a station-

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ary press conference with Buchanan on one side and us on the other; the next the rope is moving full speed ahead and fat cameramen are tumbling to the earth and being trampled by union officials, Pat at their center. But a few minutes into the parade I am ushered onto Pat's side of the rope. There I'm able to observe the process with amused detachment rather than mortal terror, at least until I see the faces in the crowd as Buchanan sees them.

God knows how he does it. Even though no one knew Buchanan would be here until yesterday, all sorts of people came prepared, with insults as well as with cheers. A Brueghel of 200,000 drunken bleacher bums seems to be screaming at us all at once. "Go! Pat! Go!" is in places drowned out by "You! Suck! Meat!" One woman runs alongside the parade and shrieks penetrating moral instruction. ("You should be ashamed of yourself!" "Women have rights, too!") "Looks like we're the story here," Buchanan says about midway through the half-mile march, and we are. The boos are nearly as loud as the cheers, but almost everyone seems to have an opinion. As we pass a final balcony overflowing with drunken 25-year-olds flipping the bird and screaming at the top of their lungs, "Up yours, Pat!" I look over to Buchanan on my left and see that he's laughing and waving to them with an enthusiasm most political candidates reserve for their ardent supporters.

"Are you actually *enjoying* this?" I finally ask him.

"Sure!" he says, with great gusto, "aren't you?"

I shrug.

"What would you rather be doing?" he says. "'Crossfire'?"

"Fuck you, Buchanan!" someone screams.

"Yo! Hitler!" shouts someone else.

To which Buchanan responds with another hearty laugh and a friendly wave. Only at the end of the parade, where the people are too drunk to take much of an interest in anything, does Buchanan's interest flag. In those rare moments when there is neither an enemy nor a friend in sight he's as lost as a normal person.

Later this evening, after a rally in which he describes the Dole campaign brilliantly as "the bland leading the bland," I bump into Buchanan in the Marriott restaurant. I suddenly remember there was something I was supposed to ask him for Morry. "Titan Wheel has a board seat open, and Morry Taylor tells me it's yours if you want it," I say, the first and probably the last time I will ever be in a position to dole out a seat on a corporate board. It's Pat's chance to play an active role in sorting out McLouth Steel. Buchanan blinks for a moment and then says, "Morry Taylor is a very nice guy. But I'm not a corporate board guy." He has worked himself into such a frenzy that he seems actually to believe this.

March 18:

I go to see Bill Dugan, the union leader who invited Buchanan to march in the parade. Dugan's office is in a building on a stretch of single-lane highway. He keeps me waiting for ten minutes or so, which gives me a chance to look around. In the lobby there is a toy model of a large crane, the pictures of the six union presidents since the local was founded in 1928 and a letter of complaint sent to Bill Clinton by Frank Hanley, the *capo di tutti capi* of all Operating Engineers. At length Dugan sends his pretty secretary out to fetch me.

Union leaders seem to have a more efficiently self-interested way about them than union members; they are more naturally predators than prey. Dugan's office is decorated wall-to-wall with mounted rifles and the heads of maybe fifteen dead animals: wild boar, wildebeest, antelope, outrageously large heads with outrageously large horns. Off in one corner stands the head of a giraffe that Dugan shot in Botswana, and if you ever wondered how you mount a head of a giraffe here is the answer. You cut it off just above the torso and stand eight feet of neck on the floor. Still, it seems rather unsporting of him, and I ask him if he shot them all. "If I hadn't they wouldn't be on the wall, would they?" he replies curtly. None of the beasts died in America, however. He would never shoot an American animal, Dugan says, planted and glowering from behind his gargantuan wooden desk.

It turns out that Dugan doesn't much care either for liberals or for journalists. Surprise! The coverage of yesterday's event merely confirmed his prejudices. The newspapers stressed the crowd's hostility to Buchanan; Dugan feels that this is merely one more distortion by the liberal press of the one candidate who has the guts to talk about the important issues. He grabs for a handful of telephone message slips, every one from a supporter pleased with the event. "By God, Bill, we're proud of you," is a typical response.

Then I notice the fawn. On the wall beneath the wildebeest, curled up in a ball, is a tiny white-speckled fawn, not much larger than an alley cat. Bambi. Dugan explains that he was driving down the road a few years ago when the car in front of him hit a deer. Both cars stopped, and Dugan negotiated to take the animal and skin it before the meat spoiled. He tossed the carcass in his boat, which happened to be hitched to the back of his truck. When he got home and cut into the animal he found a pair of fawns. The deer was days away from birthing. One of the fawns he stuck in his deep freeze, where it resides to this day. The other he had mounted in this sweet little display.

Consider the career of this animal. There it lay, awaiting its own birth, when its mother chanced to be at the wrong place at the wrong time. Dying before birth, it was then cut unknowingly from the womb, then eviscerated. Its carcass, or what remained of it, was tacked to a slab of wood, which was then affixed to the wall of a man. The fawn went straight from the womb to a wall mount in Bill Dugan's office, where it now lies curled, peaceful and seemingly content—a testament to the undying truth that the more innocent your life, the less you have to say about your fate. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Deceived and Deceiving

Early in 1964 I got a friendly letter from the French novelist Romain Gary, whom I did not know. He wrote generously about a TNR piece of mine and said that if ever I were in Paris, I should telephone him. I replied, hoping that he wouldn't regret his invitation because my wife and I would be in Paris in September. When we arrived, I phoned, and we were immediately invited to dinner. So we met Gary—and his wife, Jean Seberg.

Dinner that evening, lunch a few days later and Jean's company when she went with us to a special screening at the Cinémateque Française one morning—all these were delightful. Jean had by that time made a number of films, including her unfortunate debut in *Saint Joan*, the somewhat better *Bonjour Tristesse*, the interesting *Lilith*, the epochal *Breathless* and the rudely underrated *Five Day Lover*, but she had a quality that no director had yet caught on film. Her perky prettiness, yes; but she was also full of Midwestern wit (she was from Iowa), dry comments, quiet fun. In December she wrote me from Guadeloupe that she was "spending three days seeking the sun before my big, fat, color and Mervyn LeRoy picture begins next week. Pray for me."

The picture, *Moment to Moment*, proved to be neither big nor fat, but through the years that followed, I often wished that I could pray for her. As for the fun, the innate fun, it was obscured both in the films she made and in her life and death.

From the Journals of Jean Seberg (Planet Pictures) was made because of the years after 1964 when dreadful cruelties were dealt to her. Mark Rappaport has devised a method, which he used previously in *Rock Hudson's Home Movies*, of dramatizing biography in such a way that both the dramatization and the facts are in tension. There are no Seberg journals—not in this film, anyway—but Mary Beth Hurt, the actress who happens to have been born in Seberg's hometown, is Seberg in the film, presenting the story of her life. She stands at the side of the screen, while clips from Seberg's films are presented in the background or foreground, commenting on the clips and supplying biographical data that connect and surround them.

These clips are not always treated in orthodox fashion. For instance, an outtake from *Saint Joan* in which Seberg, at the stake, was really endangered by the fire, is repeated in various tempi. When the narration tells us that Jean was selected from among 18,000 applicants for the role and that one young woman who later became known was turned down, Barbra Streisand's face is superimposed on Jean's at the stake.

But the whole film is keyed toward the latter part of her life. (So, I heard, was the London musical *Jean*, done several years ago.) She became involved with the Black Panthers and the FBI; more specifically, J. Edgar Hoover set out to destroy her through malicious gossip in the press. The whole long disgusting story need not be repeated here. The finish came in 1979 when she was 40: she killed herself with barbiturates, and her body was found some days later in a parked car on a Paris street. When I read the awful news, I thought of the perkiness.

If she was politically naïve, she was no more so than thousands of others in those seething times. But she was a celebrity and thus a target for Hoover. It was her aura of openness that had started her career, and it was her openness that marked her for spoiling. The soundtrack of Rappaport's film is frequently fuzzy, and Hurt has little of Jean's appeal, but this film reminds us yet again that the blindfold on Justice does not always keep the scales from being tipped.

As everyone who saw *Cinema Paradiso* knows, Giuseppe Tornatore, who made it, loves Sicily, Sicilians and film. In his latest picture, **The Star Maker** (Miramax), he finds a way to indulge all three loves again.

It's the 1950s, apparently. A con man named Joe Morelli (played by the chameleon-like Sergio Castellitto) tours the villages of Sicily in his truck, setting up his tent and film camera and recorder and offering screen tests to anyone who wants one for 1500 lire. (Worth about a dollar then.) He promises nothing, but he will send the test to a studio in Rome, he says, and riches may result.

To the crowd, assembled by his loudspeaker, he distributes lines from *Gone with the Wind*—a few lines for men, a few for women—in Italian, of course. The variety of faces of the aspirants is astonishing, therefore credible: a stagestruck youth, a policeman, a gay hairdresser, a 30-year-old woman suffering from a bad

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Fargo. *At last—a recommendable Coen brothers opus. This yarn of kidnapping and murder in snowy Minnesota wobbles markedly in tone, but the comic parts* are *comic. (Reviewed 3/25/96)* **Lamerica.** *Unique and unforgettable. A young Italian swindler and an old ex-political prisoner in post-communist Albania. History enfolds us. (1/29/96)* **Land and Freedom.** *A young English communist goes to fight in Spain in 1936. The conclusion is puzzling, but Ken Loach's recreation of the times is gritty, strong. (4/1/96)* **Up Close and Personal.** *Movie-magic time. Ostensibly about an experienced editor and a new reporter in the TV news game, it's really about Robert Redford and Michelle Pfeiffer. (3/25/96)*—**SK**

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THIS JUST IN...

Every issue of *Granta* features the best new writing from around the world. In our pages you'll find fiction, reportage and photography from the acclaimed and the infamous, the prize winners and the ones to watch. And because each issue is 256 pages, our contributors aren't limited to sound-bite thoughts or tabloid concepts. Since 1979 *Granta* has published:

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BEAUTY Gabriel García Márquez watching the rain in Galicia; Bruce Chatwin following songlines in the Australian outback; Anchee Min, star of the Chinese cinema, on how her sexuality could not be repressed by the state.

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Utne Reader - Best Publication Award

This issue of *Granta* examines some questions about news. Who makes it? Who owns it? Should we believe it?

What's new about news? The same stuff, surely, came galloping from Gaul to Rome, arrived at quaysides in sailing packets, was tapped out in Morse code through submarine cables.

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines news as 'information about important or interesting events'.

A shorter definition is: man bites dog.

A new definition would be: men bite dogs, dogs sell stories.

That is the news about news: there is much more of it, and more than ever it is a commodity to be sold. News has become an entertainment and a global industry, using all the strategies of commerce to increase its ratings and revenue and cut its costs.

Including:

Philip Knightley on a life in journalism—the scoops, the groundwork, the kangaroos

Zoë Heller inside tabloid television (how many da-da-da's does theme music need?)

Lynda Schuster on a reporter killed by an anti-tank mine—her husband

Gordon Burn and **Tom Pilston**: the visual vocabulary of selling murder

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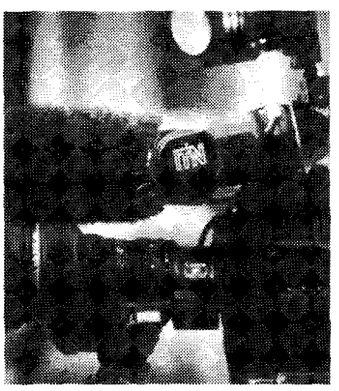

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reputation that she hasn't earned, and many, many more, some of them only glimpsed. There are others, too, who don't use the movie dialogue: among them a man who vaguely resembles Mussolini and who parrots a Duce speech, roundly razzed by the assembled crowd; an elderly recluse (played by the well-remembered Leopoldo Trieste) who speaks in Spanish as he recalls the grand old days of the Spanish Civil War; and more.

At one point the con man is conned; but the high point of the story is his encounter with a teenage convent-bred girl (the appealing Tiziana Lodato in her screen debut) who clings to him as a refuge. They travel together until the police catch up with Morelli; and, roughly, accounts are settled.

Two of Tornatore's three themes are beautifully realized. In this vast and vastly varied array of men and women aspirants, Tornatore has, like an ethnographer-artist, deployed a people before us. His gallery of Sicilians reminded me of the portrait photographs that August Sander made in the Germany of his day, except that Tornatore loves his people and Sander's feelings were mixed at best. As for Sicily itself, Tornatore celebrates it by seemingly ignoring it. For instance, a scene takes place in a village square, and in the corner behind it is a fantastic baroque church on which the camera doesn't even comment. In another scene, we discover that we are in a mountain village, and behind the screen testing, a vista spreads before us like a terrestrial heaven.

The third theme, the story of the film, is less firmly realized. Morelli's function, as a policeman eventually tells him, is that of a secular confessor: people reveal themselves to his camera. The screenplay by Tornatore and Fabio Rinaudo doesn't sufficiently develop this idea: it is merely appended. Instead, Morelli finally comes to some self-clarifications, but they are neat and facile. Tornatore's film is too true for its ending.

Still, his Sicily is enrapturing. The sheer movement and scenic encounters carry us along. And the people themselves are—fascinatingly—touching, fine, dreadful, comic, silly, sad. •

About Face

BY NOAH ISENBERG

Führer-Ex: Memoirs of a Former Neo-Nazi by Ingo Hasselbach with Tom Reiss

(Random House, 388 pp., $24)

"The secret to our political success is the deployment of the mass media," proclaimed the late German neo-Nazi Michael Kühnen, in one of the many programmatic tracts that he produced prior to his death from AIDS in 1991. "The art of the political leader is to sustain the press's cravings for sensation." Ingo Hasselbach, Kühnen's onetime admirer and his purported successor as the main leader of the neo-Nazi movement in Germany, seems to have taken these words to heart.

Having founded the National List, East Germany's first right-wing extremist party, in 1990, Hasselbach commanded extensive media coverage as the "Führer of the East." According to his memoirs, Hasselbach supported the sensational exhortations by Kühnen to desecrate Jewish cemeteries, to destroy socialist monuments and to attack refugee shelters, in order to produce a "full media blitz" and "headlines of 'the right sort'." Hasselbach dutifully complied, thereby assuring himself an equally prominent position in the spotlight. In addition to the headlines generated by his terrorist actions in the streets of Berlin in the early 1990s, Hasselbach arranged high-paying interviews ("up to four interviews a day," he reports), lavish press conferences and photo shoots, and television and film appearances. He has a gift for manipulating the media for his own gain.

In March 1993, the "Führer of the East" abandoned the neo-Nazi fold. The leftist Berlin daily *Die Tageszeitung* sardonically called Hasselbach's sudden transformation "the media event of the year." In his new identity, Hasselbach continues to maintain the same position in the spotlight. Having once been a famous neo-Nazi, he is now a famous former neo-Nazi. The German television broadcast of his renunciation of the neo-Nazi movement, marked by the telegenic and somewhat ridiculous burning of a picture of Hitler, was followed by the publication of his best-selling memoirs, *Die Abrechnung: Ein Neonazi steigt aus*, or *The Reckoning: A Neo-Nazi Gets Out*, written in collaboration with the filmmaker Winfried Bonengel. It is in the United States, however, that Hasselbach has arguably achieved his greatest media success. He made his debut in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing in April 1995, when *The New York Times* ran a piece in which he condemned the global ties of right-wing movements. In succeeding months, he has been featured in numerous articles in major American (and American-Jewish) newspapers and magazines, has published excerpts from his memoirs in *The New Yorker*, and has appeared in a prime-time television interview with David Gergen on PBS's "NewsHour."

Hasselbach may have left behind the neo-Nazi scene for good, but he clearly has not abandoned the propaganda strategies that he learned from his mentor. To be sure, he has a new cause, and it is obviously a better cause than the last one. Getting out of Nazism is preferable to staying in; but it is worth remembering, in the middle of all the din, that Hasselbach was not remotely typical of his society nor his nationality nor his generation, that he had a special problem, that the overwhelming majority of Germans have not been attracted, not for a moment, to fascism and violence. It is hardly an act of heroism to reject neo-Nazism. Hasselbach exaggerates the importance of his former life so as to aggrandize the importance of his present life. Though no longer a fascist, he is still peddling the fascination of fascism.

Hasselbach's story is certainly fascinating. The child of committed East German party functionaries, he was born in East Berlin in 1967. His father was a renowned state radio journalist and a dogmatic party member: "a Stalinist," Hasselbach calls him. His mother, who was less politically inclined, also worked at the East German press agency. His parents divorced early in his life and, since his mother held a job, Hasselbach spent much of his childhood at a *Kinderheim* outside Berlin. It was there that he first experienced "punishment" by the state and first conceived his fervent hatred of what he perceived as state oppression, that is, the limitless control of the state over his own life.

The urge to rebel came early for Hasselbach. He claims that by the age of 14, the Stasi, the East German secret police, maintained a file on him as a "potential disturber of the socialist peace." At first

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he was attracted to the small hippie subculture of East Berlin, but he quickly moved on to the punk scene, where he discovered the joys of violence, in particular the "crowd violence" that characterized his earliest gang-fighting. "There's a unique thrill," he writes, "to being in the middle of a violent, dangerous crowd and slugging, slamming, and kicking your way to victory. Each group got more violent. The punks were harder than the hippies, and the skins were harder than the punks, but there was no definite boundary."

We are given to believe that Hasselbach's rebellion was aimed against the state, though he makes little distinction between the oppressiveness of the educational system or the police and the oppressiveness of his stepfather. He confesses to harboring a deep-seated resentment for the principled anti-fascism incorporated in the official East German state apparatus. And although his initial terrorist attacks took the form of spraying anarchist symbols on residential walls, it was not long before these symbols were replaced with swastikas. In 1987, before he had turned 20, he was arrested and incarcerated for shouting that "The wall must fall!" at the government-sponsored Honorary Friendship Festival to Honor the Soviet Troops.

During his time in prison, Hasselbach underwent a conversion to neo-Nazism. "Only the hard and the cold were left alone," he observes. "I think that, this attitude acquired in prison was ideal for my later life in the neo-Nazi scene." Once released, Hasselbach established his preliminary contacts to like-minded East German neo-Nazis, first forming the "Lichtenberger Front" and then the "Movement of the 30th of January," which took its name from the date of Hitler's seizure of power in 1933. In the company of his neo-Nazi comrades, Hasselbach spent the years leading up to the fall of the Wall in and out of jail. Finally, after one failed attempt to escape to the West, Hasselbach fled East Germany just days prior to the opening of the border.

In the volatile post-unification climate of euphoria mixed with anxiety, Hasselbach found his calling. He immediately established ties to Western neo-Nazis, gaining the instant support of Michael Kühnen. It was Kühnen who recognized the Führer potential in our hero: "I was very tall and blond, exactly the 'biological' type of the perfect German leader." It was also Kühnen who convinced Hasselbach of the need for radical terrorist opposition to the "Jew-controlled Bonn Republic." From January 1990 until February 1993, Hasselbach took command as the so-called "Gauleiter of Brandenburg," the overseer of all neo-Nazi activities in the Eastern regions of the state. He headed the National List, establishing a party headquarters and bringing party membership to 800; he collaborated with neo-Nazis inside and outside Europe in the dissemination of Nazi propaganda; he organized marches and demonstrations, terrorist attacks and acts of vandalism; he founded a *Kameradschaft*, a sort of neo-Nazi laboratory or study-group, for the exploration of Nazi ideology and race theory; and he actively participated in the paramilitary training of neo-Nazi recruits.

By the spring of 1992, he writes, support for right-wing extremism had reached a record level. According to Hasselbach's obviously self-serving and patently ludicrous estimate, "more than 50 percent of Austrian and German teenagers and many older people" showed enthusiasm for the neo-Nazi cause. It is true that in 1992 German authorities reported over 2,000 acts of violence, including more than 500 firebombings of refugee homes. In many instances the German media portrayed the neo-Nazis as a rather dignified threat, as a symptom of Germany's larger social and political problems with its liberal asylum laws and the rising migration of refugees; and Hasselbach's face became a "well-known" feature of this discussion.

It was not until the infamous firebombing in Mölln, in November 1992, in which a Turkish woman and two Turkish girls were killed by neo-Nazi terrorists, that Hasselbach became (according to his account) fully aware of the deadly potential of his work. In reflecting on the motives for his transformation into a "former neo-Nazi," Hasselbach cites, in addition to the Mölln firebombing, his initial collaboration with Winfried Bonengel on the documentary film of neo-Nazi life, *Wir sind wieder da*, or *We're Back*, in 1992. His faith in the "tremendous propaganda value" of appearing in a film, he writes, ended with the "shock" of seeing himself as a "neo-Nazi Pied Piper." After the film's airing on German television, Hasselbach's mother, traumatized by her son's actions, reproached him for his fascist convictions. "This is a human-despising and cruel ideology," she told him. "It can only lead to something like what happened in Mölln, to innocent families being killed. How can you endorse that?" There followed great behind-the-scenes struggles to leave the neo-Nazi world, after which Hasselbach determined that the best way to spread the news of his departure was through the mass media.

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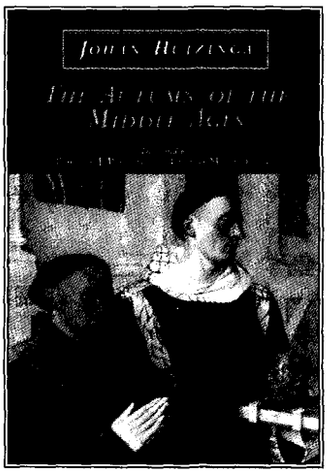

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Thus began Hasselbach's masterful media campaign. The most disturbing instrument in this campaign is *Führer-Ex*, which adapts, changes and distorts the events, the figures and the ideas that brought about his transformation. All one has to do is compare Hasselbach's original book, which appeared in Germany in 1993, with the English book that Random House has published. The differences are extraordinary. Perhaps that is why Random House strangely notes, on the publisher's information page of the book, that "*Führer-Ex* grew from *Die Abrechnung*." Grew from, indeed. *Führer-Ex* is a disgraceful exercise of historical revisionism in the service of perverse sensationalism. Commenting on an interview in Bonengel's film, Hasselbach admits to having fabricated his entire response: "I had literally created things, people and places to fit with my worldview"; and much the same might be said of *Führer-Ex*.

Hasselbach's book includes many disingenuous slips, odd fabrications and embarrassing hyperbole. Consider one of the simplest and most sickening changes in Hasselbach's tale, concerning the identity of one of his alleged cohorts in the East German neo-Nazi scene. In the German original, Hasselbach writes that this character, Mike Prötzke, was known to his friends as "Göring," owing to his "fat and bloated" features. In the English version, we encounter the same friend, but he has a different nickname. "His friends called him Auschwitz because he was always so skinny and unhealthy looking."

Why would Hasselbach—and his co-author, the journalist Tom Reiss, who is identified on the book's jacket as "the son of a Holocaust survivor"—make such a change? They wished, obviously, to shock. Like the neo-Nazi, the former neo-Nazi thrives on shock. For an American audience, "Auschwitz" has a greater power to disturb, and to command attention, than "Göring." Of course, the description of Prötzke's physical features had to be altered to accommodate his new moniker. "Auschwitz" cannot be fat. As Hasselbach observes in the concluding sentence of his English book, "Young people have short memories."

Then there is Benedix Wendt, another one of Hasselbach's unsavory friends. Wendt is a proclaimed necrophiliac and SS fanatic. In the original, where he appears under the name Friedhelm Wander, he is also a "gravedigger." In the English version, however, his story is enhanced with details that are not in the original. "He had a sleeping bag and slept in the woods [a former battlefield outside Berlin]. For him it was a kick to be near the dead soldiers. He would play with the corpses when he was by himself." Now *that* is juicy. It is also what Saul Friedlander has called, in *Reflections of Nazism*, "the kitsch of death." Is the story true? If it is, why does it appear only in the English version?

The Random House book is much expanded: it exceeds the German edition by over 200 pages. Comparing the two versions, it seems that Hasselbach has changed things that he knew secondhand into things he knows firsthand. Most significant is his alleged relationship to SS leader Heinz Barth, "the butcher of Oradour," and former Gestapo chief of Dresden Henri Schmidt, both of whom he now claims to know from prison. They are said to have provided him with his basic instruction in National Socialist ideology. This may have been indirectly the case. In the original, however, it is not Hasselbach but his close friend Frieder Meisel who encounters the distinguished Nazis in prison. "During his four-year internment in Brandenburg," Hasselbach writes, in the German edition, "he [Meisel] met several old Nazi war criminals, for example, the executioner of Oradour and the former Gestapo chief of Dresden, who worked in the tool shop." In the English version, we have this:

> Prison was also the ideal environment for acquiring the rudiments of Nazism. During my stay in various East German prisons, I met several old Nazi war criminals who were more than happy to explain their "glorious cause" to me.... The two old Nazi prisoners whom I got closest to were Heinz Barth, known as "the butcher of Oradour," because he had led the SS extermination of the town of that name in France, and the former Gestapo chief of Dresden, Henri Schmidt, who worked in the machine shop.

In interviews after the publication of *Führer-Ex*, Hasselbach has continually returned to his "personal" experiences with these two war criminals to explain his neo-Nazism. Hasselbach wants us to sympathize with him as an impressionable young anti-Communist corrupted by hardened, older Nazis. And this association with them ostensibly authenticates his position as "Führer of the East" through direct lineage, helping to disguise the fact that he was just a young opportunist.

In his more sedate German text, Hasselbach discusses violence only briefly and usually in conjunction with specific events. In the English version, a general sense of glamour, heroism and pleasure-in-pain amplifies his musings on the subject. He describes "the ultimate Führer Feeling" as "a moment when ideology and violence came perfectly together to give me utter control over a group of violent followers." And among his many tiresome reflections on violence, there are remorseless signs of delight:

> As he lay on the ground, Frank and I kicked him in the neck, in the stomach, in the face, in the skull. We were both wearing Bundeswehr paratrooper boots, designed to be deadly weapons, and I was thinking, as I kicked, Sure, his bones are breaking beneath my feet, I want them to—he provoked us, he asked for this pain, he earned it. I didn't feel an ounce of guilt.... It was a special, surreal pleasure to be kicking someone who was on the ground and couldn't fight back, a pleasure entirely separate from that of a fight situation.

The passion of these passages makes you wonder about the completeness of Hasselbach's reformation.

Such passages are largely absent from the German version. They would make no sense to a German audience. While Germany searches eagerly to present positive images of "good Germans" to the world, Hasselbach hardly belongs to those they wish to claim as their own. His autobiography was panned by the critics: "a book that tells a lot, but explains nothing," "hustling media interest," and so on. In the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, in an article called "The Lingering Descent of Ingo H.," the journalist Patrick Bahners expressed deep bewilderment over the American media celebration of "Ingo's styling" of himself, of his "art of inventing [him]self."

Yet such rhapsodies to violence are essential for pandering to an English-speaking audience anxious to replay these images of Nazism in its popular imagination. In *Führer-Ex*, this pandering takes many forms. Hasselbach's neo-Nazis are caricatures who talk in stilted Hollywood Nazi villain-speak: "I think that Kamerad Priem is the most suitable one to deal with our degenerate friends." Or: "You pig, you want to ruin the State? You're a low-down, weak swine! You're a traitor to the Fatherland! A vermin who needs to be sterilized for the health of the people!" It is only in the English version that we are vouchsafed the information that the neo-Nazi Gottfried Kussel's toilet bowl was decorated with a Star of David, "meticulously painted in yellow porcelain enamel with a black border," so that "when called to nature, you were forced to piss on a Jewish star."

At one point Hasselbach refers to neo-Nazis as "postmodern fascists." The man

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is more sophisticated than his Bundeswehr boots. He has a point, though it is not quite the point he thinks he has. *Führer-Ex* is a weightless, anything-goes, postmodern mélange of fascist rhetoric, dimestore-novel pathos and media titillation, in which truth is toyed with in the name of truth, and villain and hero become virtually indistinguishable. And with such a book Hasselbach has made his splash in the American media. It makes sense. This is, after all, the story of a "redeemed" ex-Führer. You might even say a recovering ex-Führer. The man who once distributed signs with such slogans as "foreigners are social parasites" now tells us that "foreign cultures have become my everyday existence, and I couldn't imagine living without them." We are supposed to applaud.

A critical element in Hasselbach's about-face has been his own face, which looms large in the publicity and which appears on the covers of German and American editions of his memoirs. The self-proclaimed "Aryan poster boy" is still a poster boy. He knows what the camera can do for him. He was, of course, the first to take notice of the "marketability" of his appearance: the 6'6" "blond beast" confesses that during his days as a neo-Nazi leader he often used his "looks to gain support." And here is *The New Yorker* proudly publishing a portrait of the blond beast by Helmut Newton. Helmut Newton! The refined, sensual photograph, in bold shadows and lowered perspective, conveys an edge of danger and the usual erotic gloss. The picture on the cover of the Random House book is rather more gritty: this darling of Condé Nast appears in a leather jacket, his arms folded, looking self-assured and a little gorgeous. Here is the enlightened neo-Nazi as sex symbol, as object of desire, as a hero for his time. This, surely, is what Susan Sontag, in her famous demolition of Leni Riefenstahl, meant by "fascinating fascism."

At a time when the threat of neo-Nazi groups, right-wing militias and other extremist organizations is cause for concern in the United States, the publication of the confessions of a former neo-Nazi from Germany might seem for many a welcome occasion. But this fable of the prodigal neo-Nazi cannot withstand exposure to a light harsher than Helmut Newton's. Ingo Hasselbach is still reading about himself, and for him and his gullible promoters, that is all that matters.

NOAH ISENBERG teaches German studies at Wesleyan University.

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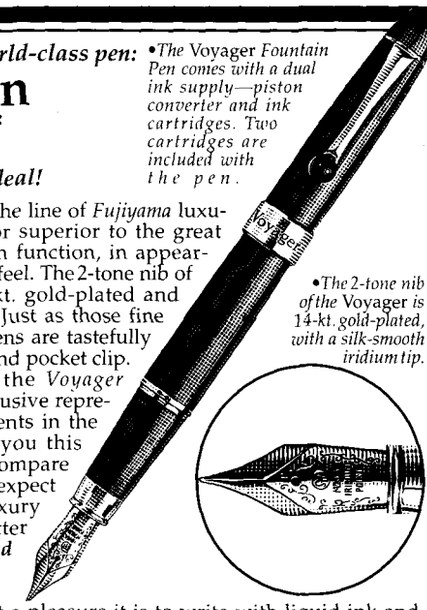

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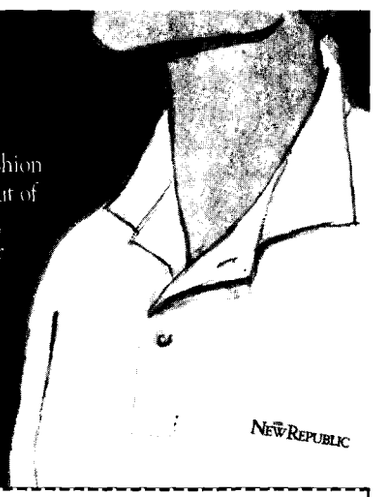

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Contraventions

BY SHIRLEY CHRISTIAN

A Twilight Struggle: American Power and Nicaragua, 1977-1990 by Robert Kagan

(The Free Press, 903 pp., $37.50)

Nicaragua has disappeared from the front page of our newspapers and is no longer on the tip of every tongue in Washington. Yet the names of the adobe towns in its almost inaccessible northern and western mountains still resonate in my ears: Ocotal, Wiwili, Pantasma, Jicaro, Quilali, Jalapa, Somotillo, places with the feel of the American West a century ago, at once foreign and familiar in the same way that I once appeared foreign yet familiar to a shopkeeper in one of those towns where horses and mules are almost the only form of locomotion, besides walking. Looking closely into my green eyes, he said, with a hint of pride, "We have some people around here with eyes like yours. They're descended from the Marines." Later, I asked around to see if anyone actually knew someone who claimed Marine descent. I didn't find anyone who did, but the encounter brought home to me how close our relationship with Nicaragua has been for a century or more. It has been the kind of historical relationship that makes Nicaragua one of the special cases to which grand theories about foreign policy do not apply.

In his huge and important book on the conduct of policy toward Nicaragua during the Carter, Reagan and Bush administrations, Robert Kagan is deeply skeptical of large ideological and theoretical schemes. Although he served in the Reagan administration, Kagan has a scholar's view. Indeed, it is never clear exactly what role he held in the formulation and the conduct of Nicaraguan policy between 1984 and 1988, the years he was in government. It would be interesting to know more precisely the scope of his influence at the time; but since it appears that he was not one of the major figures in making and arguing policy, the reader can be thankful for his relative dispassion. Still, Kagan does occasionally make his own thinking explicit, as when he differs with certain books written in the heat of the conflict and occasionally with the journalistic coverage of the Sandinistas and the debate in Washington.

Kagan has the advantage of material that has been declassified in recent years, which was not available to earlier writers. Also, he was able to interview some of the principals in 1990 and 1991, after they had played their parts in the story. His interviews with Humberto Ortega, until recently the Sandinista army chief and party strategist, add a new perspective to the events. All of this has enabled Kagan to produce a book that is relatively complete and which benefits from being written after most of the pivotal events were over. It will probably be the definitive work on this subject for years to come. It will certainly be the weightiest: with its footnotes, the book pushes 900 pages. And it can be rough going. Sometimes Kagan gets bogged down in arcane congressional maneuverings that go on for pages and pages.

Kagan takes issue with a number of assumptions about Nicaraguan policy in the 1980s, but also in the early years of the century. He challenges the common contention that interventions on the part of the United States have caused Nicaragua's crises, and those of much of Latin America as well. Kagan argues that the opposite was generally the case, that Nicaraguan circumstances brought about American interventions. And so he sees the Somoza dictatorship not as the creation of the United States, but as something that came about because the United States had withdrawn from Nicaragua prematurely, in 1933, after overseeing relatively free elections. The dictatorship developed, he says, because the United States refused to re-involve itself in Nicaragua during the following four decades. "For most of this period," he writes, "the United States did not keep the Somozas in power any more than it had put them in power. Indifference and non-interference had been all Somoza required in 1936; it was enough for the next 40 years." This conforms to my own reading of Nicaraguan history. It is also refreshingly distinct from the more conventional academic argument on Nicaragua, which proposes that we begat the dictator, who in turn begat the Sandinistas; or that a regime of the extreme right inevitably became a regime of the extreme left.

Kagan makes clear that most Democrats in Congress supported or accepted the concept of providing military and humanitarian aid to the Contras in the early years of the anti-Sandinista policy. He finds much less importance in the role played by Oliver North in keeping the Contras fighting than seemed to be the case in 1986, after North's dramatic dismissal and the subsequent congressional hearings and court cases. He also provides details on the inherent hypocrisy in the so-called Boland Amendment, which in its various forms purported to prevent the United States from trying to overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, but which in fact was rigged with loopholes. Finally, despite the fact that this struggle occurred in the "twilight" of the Soviet Union's global role, he finds that the Soviets did little to reduce their support for the Sandinistas as the Soviet Union itself underwent internal change and improved relations with the United States. In short, the Reagan and Bush administrations got no real help from Gorbachev on Nicaragua.

Kagan's book opens when Jimmy Carter took office in 1977 and the Somoza regime in Nicaragua began, almost concurrently, to come apart. It ends two years into the Bush administration, with the defeat of the Sandinista regime at the ballot box. Kagan shows that the evolution from the Nicaraguan policies of the Carter administration to those of the Reagan administration was not an abrupt change in direction. The Carter administration had been no fonder of the Sandinista regime than the Reagan administration. But it could not agree on what to do. Kagan masterfully captures the various positions within the Carter administration as it grappled with whether to shore up Somoza, push him out, try to forge a new government without the Sandinistas, or embrace them in the hope that the United States might nudge them along the democratic path.

Kagan calls the transition from Carter to Reagan in January 1981 the most dramatic changing of the guard of the cold war era, with the Carter people "guided by the lessons of Vietnam and Cuba" and the Reagan people believing that "the most important lessons were learned at Munich in 1938." In the specifics of Central American policy, however, the real difference was that the Reagan administration simply wanted nothing to do with Nicaragua. It viewed the existence of the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua as

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a failure of the Carter administration, and at first it gave no thought to correcting that failure. Reagan's people preferred to concentrate on preventing the rise of a similar leftist regime in El Salvador, where the guerrillas of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front already seemed on the verge of toppling the government.

The Reagan administration early on divided between those who wanted to make Central America a strategic and political priority and those who wanted to sacrifice it to the effort to find bipartisan support for the domestic program. Alexander Haig, the new Secretary of State, was one of those who wanted to put Central America on the front burner. But even he considered Nicaragua a distraction from the real problem in the hemisphere, which was Castro's Cuba. Kagan believes that Haig really meant it when he spoke, early in 1981, about "going to the source." Haig instructed Robert McFarlane, then the State Department Counselor, to develop a plan to roll back Castro's control of Cuba. Kagan writes that McFarlane told him in an interview in 1991 that he asked a group of officials from the Pentagon, the CIA and the State Department to draw up a set of recommendations. After several meetings, however, the group decided unanimously that the plan was unworkable, because "isolating, rolling back, or overthrowing Castro ... would require substantial military efforts that the American people would not support." Military officials feared that the use of so many ships and troops in the Caribbean would open up areas of weakness elsewhere that the Soviet Union could exploit. McFarlane recalled one official asking what would happen if Brezhnev took Berlin in response.

Instead, the Reagan administration set out on a search for ways to slow or to prevent the flow of arms to the Salvadoran rebels. As a consequence of the Sandinista aid to the Salvadoran rebels, Reagan suspended aid to Nicaragua on April 1, but the action merely formalized a decision that Jimmy Carter was on the verge of implementing before he left office. Also in the early months of the Reagan administration, Nicaraguans disillusioned by the crackdown on economic and political liberty in Sandinista-ruled Nicaragua began leaving for Miami, Honduras and elsewhere. Some gradually came together with former members of the Somoza-era National Guard in the shell of what was to become the Contra movement. (Kagan uses the term "contras" throughout, even though in its origin in the Sandinista press it was simply "La Contra," which was short for "the counter-revolution." In Washington it became a plural word, and Kagan has adopted that usage.)

Through Enrique Bermúdez, a former colonel in the National Guard, the Argentine military government had begun to provide money, training and advisers. CIA agents in the field were also in contact with the Nicaraguans from early 1981 onwards, but Kagan says that the idea of arming anti-Sandinista fighters "sparked little enthusiasm among senior administration officials." During that same time, Haig dismissed the idea as the worst kind of "incrementalism." Instead, Thomas Enders, the new Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America, began to try, diplomatically, to convince the Sandinistas to halt support of the FMLN. He even told Daniel Ortega that the United States would accept the irreversible nature of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua if the Sandinistas would stop aiding the Salvadoran guerrillas. If this were to happen, he said, the United States would commit itself not to use or threaten the use of force against the Sandinista Front. But Enders encountered only rage from the Sandinistas, who called him arrogant. Back in Washington, he was also soundly criticized for demanding too little of the Sandinistas. In October 1981 the Sandin-

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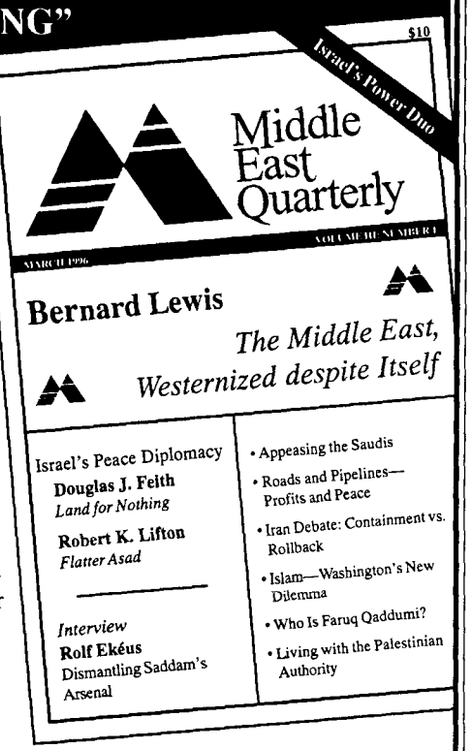

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ista regime formally rejected Enders's proposals. Kagan writes:

> By far the most decisive issue in the Sandinistas' calculations was their conviction that the power of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc would allow them to challenge American hegemony even in the Western Hemisphere. American observers who later believed the United States forced the Sandinistas into the arms of the Soviets by its aggressive policies failed to understand the Sandinistas' strategic assessment at the time.

While Enders pursued negotiations, the CIA was preparing an alternative policy of arming anti-Sandinista fighters. But the Reagan administration moved toward that step in a haphazard manner, without enthusiasm. Arming the Contras was seen as a possible bargaining chip that Enders might yet trade in return for an end to the Sandinistas' support for the Salvadoran guerrillas.

In November 1981, President Reagan approved a national security decision, based on proposals that Enders had presented a week earlier, to promote democratic reforms in El Salvador while also fighting the guerrillas in that country. There was also a plan for covert actions against the Sandinistas, which Enders described as a way to convince the Sandinistas to return to negotiations. Days after President Reagan approved the covert program, CIA Director William Casey met with the intelligence committees of both houses of Congress, but Kagan says Casey "stumbled" in his explanation, thereby planting the seeds of what became one of the biggest controversies surrounding the Contras. "Instead of presenting the contras as a 'bargaining chip,' intended to pressure the Sandinistas into agreeing to end support for the Salvadoran guerrillas," Kagan writes, "Casey gave some members of the committee the impression that the contras would themselves be interdicting the arms flow." Kagan provides no declassified material or direct quotes from Casey to back this assertion, which is based on news accounts of the time, which were themselves largely attributed to committee members. The confusion allowed skeptical journalists and Democratic opponents to challenge the support of the Contras every time it was obvious that the Contras were doing something not linked directly to halting the arms supply to the Salvadoran guerrillas—which was the case almost all the time.

In 1982, with President Reagan pushing democratization as the cure for political problems around the world, he and his aides began to criticize the Sandinistas for their repressive internal policies, such as the massive relocation of Miskito Indians. Kagan says that the Reagan administration's march toward support of "the campaign for democracy" in Nicaragua was slowed only by resistance in Congress to such a policy, which went to the heart of the ideological debate that had rent American politics for years. Most Democrats on Capitol Hill had supported or accepted the Reagan administration's policy of aiding and abetting the Contras until reports of the covert program began to surface in newspapers and on radio and television. Liberal Democrats, largely unrepresented on the House Intelligence Committee, began to cry foul about a policy

Nights of 1995

In memory of James Merrill

Even the fowles
Were sad for Orphye, and the beast with sorye syghing howles:
The rugged stones did moorne for him, the woods which many a tyme
Had followed him to heere him sing, bewayled this same cryme.
Yea even the trees lamenting him did cast theyr leavy heare.
The rivers also with theyr teares (men say) encreased were.
—Ovid

Profligate with loss,
the live oak wept the old leaves down;
one pine needle stitched the air
a shroud to enfold one last song.

Come back once more.
Come as far as the wild plum.
It blooms like snow
and then its white-hot grief is gone.

Just to the edge of the yard,
the edge left raw of the upper world.
Stay here in the plum's white shade.
Trees of the underworld refuse to unburden;

come back to the Coffee Café in Milledgeville
so "cleverly named," your letter said last fall.
Let the name stop you again,
you whose words come back to haunt us.

Come after hours, even.
You'll be the ashen one in the corner
whose hand is raised, the bones still beautiful.
Seeing through you, who don't want anything,

the waitress will go home. The last clean cup
still overturned, a planchette-in-waiting—
where did you leave your Ouija board?
Oh, rattle the cup until it gives up one last word.

Call us. Call us out of the animal.
The dead are good tonight but I,
just the raccoon rustling the trash out back,
will lift my quivering snout

from the delicate ribs of a chicken.
Crouch down. Tomorrow I'll remember nothing
though a rank scent persist on my paws.
Put on your mask, your domino. I lift my voice

like a scrap of meat, into a monody.
This hill of beans. That girl that I once was,
asleep somewhere, still at her books.
A language dead, the casket rusted shut.

Ave atque vale.

DEBORA GREGER

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that tested the Democratic Party consensus that American intervention to overthrow a foreign government was no longer acceptable. Some liberal Democrats and commentators bluntly—and erroneously, it turned out—challenged the administration's assertions that the Sandinistas were still supplying the Salvadoran guerrillas.

When the House Intelligence Committee, under Representative Edward Boland, met in 1983 to consider the intelligence authorization bill, there was some opposition to the idea of funds for the Contras, but this was overcome by a phrase added to the secret annex to the bill, declaring it to be the will of Congress that none of the funds be spent "for the purpose of overthrowing the government of Nicaragua or provoking an exchange between Nicaragua and Honduras." Kagan observes that the compromise served the interests of both sides by addressing only the administration's "intent" rather than its "actions." "So long as the covert support for the anti-Sandinista forces was not 'for the purpose' of overthrowing the government in Managua, it did not matter if the contras themselves were fighting to remove the Sandinistas from power." The objective, according to one official, was "to keep Managua off balance and apply pressure to stop providing military aid to the insurgents in El Salvador."

These were distinctions that most journalists and many liberals couldn't make, or refused to make. Even within the Reagan administration there were those who thought it unwise to base support for the fast-growing Contra movement on such a thin distinction. In truth, President Reagan was becoming increasingly attracted to the idea of a fight for democracy in Nicaragua. The differences between the goals of the Contras and those of the administration were narrowing.

As the months passed, and the Contras grew, and the coverage of their successes became impossible to ignore, many in Congress became even more uncomfortable with the policy. Kagan reminds us that Tom Harkin, then a member of the House, charged that the United States was "siding with perhaps the most hated group of Nicaraguans that could exist outside of the borders of Nicaragua." Harkin must have missed the news reports that documented remarkable support for the Contras in the countryside. Criticism from Harkin and other liberal Democrats put Boland and other members of the Intelligence Committee in a difficult position, but for a considerable time they resisted closing the loophole that allowed the Reagan administration to continue support for the Contras.

As the tide of opposition rose in Congress, the Nicaraguan rebel forces were growing at a phenomenal pace. The Reagan administration, according to Kagan, was surprised by this phenomenon and was unprepared for it. But Kagan believes that the pressure from the rebel actions forced the Sandinistas to loosen some restraints inside Nicaragua in late 1982 and to make itself amenable to diplomatic efforts by other Latin American governments. In January 1983, the foreign ministers of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama initiated an effort to bring peace throughout Central America, an undertaking that was soon known as Contadora, the name of the Panamanian island where the group first met.

Throughout much of 1983, Central American policy was tied in knots by such matters as differences within the administration about how to deal with the Democrats, American military exercises in Honduras, and Democratic positioning to succeed Tip O'Neill as Speaker of the House. Much was made at the time, by pundits and by politicians, about the possibility that George Shultz, the new Secretary of State, was in disagreement with other Cabinet-level officials on how to handle Nicaragua. Kagan confirms that the dispute was so bad in 1983 that the foreign policy-making apparatus "came unhinged"; but he also says that Shultz did not disagree with his colleagues' "assessment of the strategic stakes in Central America."

Typically for someone new in his post, Shultz wanted to give negotiations another chance, while those who had been involved in Central American policy from the beginning—including Caspar Weinberger, Jeane Kirkpatrick and William Clark—thought that negotiations had already failed. One of the things Shultz tried was to get diplomatic help from Mexico soon after taking office—a step that raises doubts about the wisdom and the knowledge of his advisers. Anyone grounded in Latin American realities knew that, aside from Cuba and Nicaragua, Mexico in 1983 would likely be the least helpful government in Latin America to the Reagan administration on almost any issue. Shultz also wanted to find an accommodation with Congress, while Casey was always willing to confront Congress. Moreover, Shultz had a broader view of his job and priorities than some of the others, leading Casey at one point to tell him that instead of "traveling around Europe," he ought to be campaigning for public support on Central America.

Jim Wright, normally something of a hawk but needing liberal support to win the Speaker's job, maneuvered passage of a bill on July 28 requiring a complete cutoff of Contra aid. But the Intelligence Committee of the Republican-dominated Senate approved aid based on a new presidential finding, and conferees approved it. The next year, the Senate again approved Contra aid, but the scandal over CIA mining of Nicaraguan harbors led to overwhelming defeat for the aid in the House, with many Republicans voting with the Democrats. This time, the Senate was unable to prevail in conference.

Meanwhile Shultz was putting new emphasis on negotiations with the Sandinistas, with strong opposition from others in the administration, who were, in fact, beginning to look for funding for the Contras from third countries. Kagan describes how they found it:

> In a meeting with the Saudi Arabian ambassador to the United States, Prince Bandar, McFarlane let it be known that "it looked as though we were heading for a defeat regarding congressional support for the contras, that it was almost inevitable that the administration would fail in getting any support for the contras and, because of that, it would represent a substantial loss for the President." The Saudi ambassador understood the point and returned to McFarlane days later with the news that his government had decided to provide the contras with $1 million each month through the end of the year. The Saudi donations would eventually amount to some $32 million.

By 1985, after the Sandinistas had won presidential elections that lacked international supervision as well as serious opposition, Ronald Reagan moved ever further along his path of demanding internal democratization in Nicaragua, prompted in part by a Sandinista crackdown that included massive relocations of rural populations and widespread military conscription. In mid-1985, incensed by Sandinista policies and the Ortega brothers' frequent travels to Moscow, enough Democrats joined Republicans on the Hill to approve new "humanitarian" aid to the Contras. "Humanitarian" was taken to mean non-lethal aid that would allow the Contras and their families to continue to exist. It covered more than just food and housing, being stretched to cover some military items, such as boots, that didn't kill people directly. But there was a tacit understanding among the Democrats and others, as Kagan shows, that the Contras were still able to go to war with the help of money for arms

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and ammunition from unnamed "private groups."

The war waxed and waned, depending upon the weather and the state of supplies and equipment on each side. In late 1985, with most of the Contras now back in base camps in Honduras, Oliver North worked from the Old Executive Office Building to try to set up an air resupply operation with the help of Richard Secord and others whose names would be on the nightly news in the next year or two. President Reagan also decided to seek a new round of military aid for the Contras but ran into congressional demands for a new diplomatic initiative. On May 8, 1986, Oscar Arias was inaugurated as president of Costa Rica, Nicaragua's democratic neighbor to the south and the country that for generations had shared the tribulations of Nicaraguans seeking democracy at home. Arias soon proposed to other Central American presidents that "democratization" inside Nicaragua become a central requirement of any agreement. Although Arias was not popular with the Reagan administration, Kagan praises Arias for quickly grasping the importance of internal democracy in Nicaragua if peace was ever to come to Central America, insisting that the root of the Central American crisis lay in the "totalitarian" nature of the Sandinista regime. Kagan calls this "an open challenge not only to the Sandinistas but to the Contadora Group, which had all but declared that aspect of the negotiations closed."

In mid-1986, with more and more Democrats coming around to the need for democratization in Nicaragua, and, seeing the Contras as a weapon for bringing this about, Congress approved resumption of military aid to the rebel movement. This was seen as a major victory for Reagan; but later that year, after a Contra re-supply plane was shot down by Sandinista forces, the story began to unfold of a secret arms-for-hostages trade with Iran to obtain the release of American captives in Lebanon. The "surplus" from those transactions was supposed to have gone to help the Contras under North's plan, but Kagan convincingly makes the case that very little of that money actually reached the Contras or their arms buyer, Adolfo Calero. Rather, it had been the $32 million in Saudi money and the American aid that had kept the Contras fighting all those years. "For all the controversy raised about the diversion," Kagan writes, "the Contras were fortunate if they received $2 million worth of tangible benefits" during the nine months of the North-Secord supply operation.

While Congress subsequently devoted itself to investigating the Iran-Contra scandal, and the American public watched Oliver North on its television sets, in Central America Oscar Arias was rolling out a full-scale effort to end the Contra war and also bring democracy to Nicaragua—two goals that many thought couldn't be accomplished. Still, in mid-1987, after a lot of give-and-take among the Central American leaders, and with some input from both Democrats and a skeptical administration in Washington, the deadlock was broken by a seemingly spontaneous proposal by the Salvadoran president, José Napoleon Duarte. He proposed that on the day that the Sandinistas implement democratic reforms, the United States and Nicaragua would simultaneously cease their aid to the Contras and the Salvadoran guerrillas, respectively. It was also agreed that "domestic opposition groups that laid down their arms" would be part of a national dialogue in Nicaragua.

Like so many other Central American peace efforts, this one did not bring peace; but its concepts constituted the seeds of peace. Daniel Ortega and the Sandinistas did begin to liberalize political life in Nicaragua and to release some political prisoners. Political opponents, the Catholic Church leadership and others seized the opening and began to campaign for more concessions. Arias pressed the Sandinistas to negotiate a cease-fire directly with the Contras, but the Contras were passing through one of their successful phases, gradually increasing their presence in rural areas closer to the nation's center.

Early in the last year of his presidency, Ronald Reagan lost another battle for military aid to the Contras, and the Contras felt they had no choice but to open negotiations with the Sandinistas for a cease-fire. The next year, 1989, as the Bush administration was taking office with a desire to deflate the Nicaraguan issue, Daniel Ortega announced that his government would hold presidential elections in early 1990. His thinking was that such a move would head off any possible new effort to get Contra aid out of the U.S. Congress and that he would easily win the elections. The Bush administration thought he would win as well, but saw this as a way to unchain itself from the Contras. Ortega and Bush were wrong about the elections. With close international supervision, the Nicaraguan people threw their support behind Violeta Chamorro, the newspaper publisher and reluctant politician who had to campaign from a chair because of a bad leg. (After a six-year term of turbulence and little success, she is expected to hand over the office to an elected successor this year.)

Kagan notes that in 1990 it seemed as if everybody in Washington viewed Chamorro's election as a triumph, but nobody could agree on which policy deserved the credit. "Conservatives claimed that the result was a vindication of Reagan's policies of supporting the contras; liberals charged that it was only the abandonment of those policies that had worked. Conservatives praised Reagan; liberals praised Arias; and the Bush administration, with some justification, praised itself." Kagan's own view is clear: "American support for the contras had been essential. The Sandinistas had never intended to hold elections at all when they first came to power. Their dream and their passion was for socialism.... It was not the responsibilities of ruling that made moderates of the Sandinistas ... but the very real danger that, unless they moderated their revolution, they might cease ruling altogether."

What strikes one most, in the end, is that the solution was found in the internal democratization of Nicaragua. The problem was that it took more than a decade for everyone to make their way to this conclusion. It seemed obvious to me, I must admit, when I first set foot in Nicaragua in August 1979, just weeks after the Somozas had fled. In the pages of this magazine, in 1981, I suggested that the majority of Nicaraguans were disillusioned with the Sandinistas and would vote against them "if given a chance." In Washington, of course, learning is a slow process.

Finally, Kagan is concerned with the long term. This is a book more about history than about politics. At the end of his book, he returns to his historical analysis, according to which the United States had erred in the past by washing its hands of Nicaragua prematurely after a period of intervention. To steer a country like Nicaragua along a course toward democracy, he says, "would seem to require something other than spasmodic interventions followed by hasty withdrawals." He suggests that the United States ought to have pursued a "consistent policy, one that accepted the inescapable facts of American hegemony and one that assumed responsibility for the development of democratic institutions and the peaceful transfer of power in Nicaragua," adding that "subtle use of American influence would probably obviate the need for the kinds of forceful interventions that have caused so much controversy over the years."

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Unfortunately, he concludes, "the ambivalence in the American soul has made such steady intervention almost impossible to sustain." Kagan's notion of "American hegemony," of a subtle and constant American engagement in its region, may seem implausible or improper to liberals, but it seems logical in countries such as Nicaragua, or so my own travels down dusty Nicaraguan roads have taught me.

SHIRLEY CHRISTIAN covered Nicaragua for *The Miami Herald* from 1979 to 1983 and for *The New York Times* from 1991-1993, and is the author of *Nicaragua: Revolution in the Family.*

Loaded Words

BY DANIEL AARON

The Diaries of Dawn Powell, 1931-1965 edited by Tim Page

(Steerforth Press, 513 pp., $32)

Dawn Powell stares out watchfully from the photograph on the dust jacket of Tim Page's edition of her diaries. It is the face of a firm and fastidious woman who knows the world. One of her cats (is it Fagin or Perkins?) dozes in her arms.

She was 22 in 1918 when she left Shelby, Ohio, for New York City. "There is really one city for everyone just as there is one major love," she wrote thirty-five years later. "New York is my city because I have an investment I can always draw on—a bottomless investment." Save for brief returns to see her Ohio relatives, a few working jaunts in Hollywood and one trip to Paris, she stayed anchored to her "rock," the site of her serio-comic tales, a harder place than F. Scott Fitzgerald's lost city but no less magical. It was her Happy Island and Vanity Fair, where hospitable bartenders, cadging artists, promoters of the culture trade, "society" types, dupes and rogues were equally entitled to breathe "the heady New York air, that delirious narcotic of ancient sewer dust, gasoline fumes, roasting coffee beans, and the harsh smell of sea that intoxicates inland nostrils."

Powell's marriage to Joseph Gousha, an advertising executive, in 1920 wasn't made in heaven. A son, schizophrenic and spastic from birth, remained a beloved but trying burden for the rest of her life. She lived in remote propinquity with her husband and more intimately with Coburn Gilman, a magazine editor whose temperament and humor resembled her own. By 1965, she had published fifteen novels, several volumes of short stories and a play. Only a few of them were in print when she died.

Tim Page, who is writing Powell's biography, attributes her current revival chiefly to a generous appraisal of her work that Gore Vidal wrote nine years ago. Since then, eight of her novels have been reissued, but whether their availability and the publication of her diaries will guarantee her posthumous fame remains to be seen. She has never lacked discriminating admirers. Ernest Hemingway, Edmund Wilson, John Dos Passos and Malcolm Cowely hailed her as the cleverest and wittiest writer in New York, and the most neglected, too; but their approval didn't substantially boost the sales of her books.

One has only to sample a few of them to see why neither the newspaper reviewers scouting for best-sellers nor the Heavy Thinkers found her fiction "significant." Still, considering the succession of New York-based novels she spun between 1936 and 1962 (*Turn, Magic Wheel, The Happy Island, Angels on Toast, A Time to be Born, The Locusts Have No King, The Wicked Pavilion, The Golden Spur*), it does seem strange to find no entry for her in *The Oxford Companion to American Literature*, or in *Notable American Women*, or in Kenneth Jackson's recent *Encyclopedia of New York*, and, strange, too, that she is not mentioned in Ann Douglas's *Terrible Honesty*, her survey of culture in Manhattan in the 1920s.

Edmund Wilson finally got around, in *The New Yorker* in 1962, to explaining Powell's special genius, but it was too late to resuscitate her expiring reputation. Wilson suggested some reasons why she hadn't caught on with a wider public. It was, he said, because she refused to blow her own horn, disdained interviewers and spurned publicity. Worse, she did nothing "to stimulate feminine daydreams." Women couldn't identify with heroines who seemed "to be as sordid and absurd as the men." She didn't write

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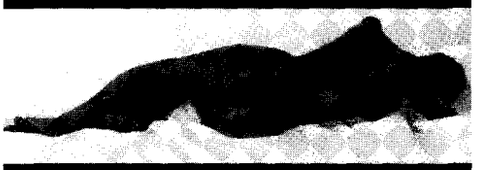
The Real Sleeper



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love stories, either. Recurring types in her "high social" comedies were closer in spirit to the inventions of Anthony Powell, Evelyn Waugh and Muriel Spark than to the characters in most American novels of manners.

Other things may account for Powell's marginality in American letters. She was *never* trendy, and although she was on good terms at one time with radical artists and writers (the Group Theater ingloriously produced one of her plays in 1933), and would as soon drink with a communist as a capitalist, she remained apolitical. Throughout the '30s and '40s her targets were not only the well-heeled patrons and patronizers of the arts, and the "wit-proof" middle class, but also the "so sincerely feebleminded" left intellectuals whose support at this point might have made a difference to her fortunes. She sardonically noted "the merciless exploitation of the rich by communists, artists, and deserving people" and the "rigorous secret laws against anyone who derides a member of the Party (unless he happens to be a member of the Party himself); the self-deception, the acquisitiveness for property, passion for money and estate, the throwing of all personal feeling for fellow men into a machine 'Party' which exempts one from kindness, generosity, any form of idealism."

Out of tune with the aesthetic and ideological movements of her times—the proletarian school, the big warm social novels proving the goodness of human nature—and unable to read or write "difficult" experimental fiction tailored for academic exegetes, Powell fell back on the shrinking remnant who understood and savored her ironies. She thought of herself as a satirist. Satire is often mistaken for cynicism, but she defined satire as the art of writing about the world without retouching it, about people as they think they are and really are. "What the reviewers call satire," she once observed, "is 'whimsy' and what they call realism is romanticism." The "only record of a civilization is satire."

This was the view of a writer closer to Ben Jonson and the Restoration wits than to the wits of *The New Yorker*, a magazine to which she contributed but whose literary influence she deprecated. Neither didactic nor moralistic, she could sting when provoked. In the words of one of her characters, she liked to "play with loaded words and see who gets hit." Usually, however, she regarded satire as a game of nine-pins, the pleasure of which was to "strike truly" and watch the pins tumble. Only a limited audience could at once enjoy satire and grasp its serious "imputations," she believed, for true wit is "a cry of pain"; it should break a good man's heart. But its primary business was to entertain: "it should not be so bitter as to cancel its theatrical duty."

Powell lived up to this injunction and to the other admonitions that interlace her remarkable diaries. About three quarters of them, Page estimates, are assembled in this volume. They constitute a writer's working journal. This was partly an outlet for her woes and anxieties, but primarily it was a storehouse of impressions, ideas and vignettes garnered for her incubating books. Like Emerson, she "Boswellized" herself. Despite her anguish over bad reviews, constant money worries, marriage problems and mother problems, and wrenching glimpses into the pit, the diary as a whole is curiously impersonal, even upbeat. Powell picks herself off the pavement like one of those indestructible creatures in animated cartoons, flattened, exploded, shredded but miraculously resuming its former shape, slightly chastened but not for long. We aren't surprised to learn that her motto was "Allez-oop!"

"In diaries, revealing the innermost soul," Powell wrote, "the entries stop when anything interesting happens or whenever the writer is happy. Diaries tell us nothing—chips from a heroic statue." In hers, the chips subsume a life fragmented into moments of drinking, conversing, bitching, observing and, above all, writing, which was her addiction and her delight. The diaries teem with famous and with all-but-forgotten editors, writers, publishers, playwrights, composers, painters, cartoonists, stage designers, critics, journalists, night-club entertainers, musicians, lawyers, producers, dancers, educators and columnists she encountered in her ramblings. With the exception of a dozen or so unsparingly anatomized intimates, they appear and disappear without comment.

But not without a trace. In this record of a writer's life, circa 1931-1965, readers of her New York novels will recognize the originals or the prototypes of her major and bit players and the preliminary sketches of their habits and their habitats. Here, for the first time, we watch them perform. The celebrity-stricken clamor for access to Bohemia; parasites of both sexes search for hosts; the rich batten on the gifted "to feed their bleak minds and to verify their superiority." Afloat in alcohol, they collide at hilarious and disastrous parties—parties for artists and their clients, parties for "causes," parties for gossip scavengers, parties crashed by male and female hunters on the prowl. They congregate in beautifully rendered watering holes (Powell was a connoisseur of bars and an authority on the culture of Drink) where they interact in various stages of tipsiness, the diarist at once inside and outside the sodden company.

Most of the time she gloves her claws, but not when her prey happens to be best-selling women novelists with "a Big Industry quality, as if they were accustomed to make people jump," or unprofessional tyros who profane their art to "serve their female purpose." Every page of their fiction, she marvels,

> is squirming with sensitivity, every line—no matter how well disguised the heroine is—coyly reveals her exquisite taste, her delicate charm, her never-at-a-disadvantage body (which of course she cares nothing about and is always faintly amused at men's frenzies over her perfect legs, breasts, etc.) What gallantry, what equalness to any situation in the home, the camp, the yacht, the trenches, the dives—what *aristocrats* these women writers, whose pen advertises the superiority of their organs.

That her judgments are ostensibly based on talent, not gender, she signals in her almost cordial reception of the newcomer, Mary McCarthy, about whom Powell wrote:

> She has her two manners—her lace-curtain Irish, almost unbelievably genteel lady scholar torn between desire to be Blue Stocking without losing her Ladyship; and then her shanty Irish where she relaxes, whamming away at her characters like a Queen of the Roller Derby, groin-kicking, shin-knifing, belly-butting, flailing away with skates and all arms at her characters and jumping on them with a hoarse whoop of glee when they are felled.

On the whole, however, the "lady literati" failed to meet Powell's exacting demands and too readily exchanged their genius for success. Admittedly the men did, too, but not even the most unscrupulous male sellout, she thought, ever ceased "to bemoan his lost ideal."

Still, if her male literary friends fare better than the women in the *Diaries*, they by no means escape hanging. She may have needed and relied upon them, respected their creativeness, cherished their praise, found in their company a retreat from her "hoodlum world," but she itemized their deformities all the same. She ridiculed the ultra-masculinity of the boastful ruthless giant, Hemingway (was it he who inspired her title for a "Masculine novel—*Promiscuity Recollected in Senility*"?); wrote devastating criticisms of her old and ever loyal friend, Edmund Wilson ("He wants to see his ladies alone

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so he can attack them, leave them chastened and feeling limp, hopeless, unloved, unattractive"); and pinpointed the fatal character flaw of the "half ascetic and half sybarite" John Dos Passos. Scores of her less well-known acquaintances are skewered just as deftly in portraits Congreve or Wycherley would have commended.

Peppered with aphorisms, the *Diaries* are a compendium of Powell's literary injunctions and advice to writers. She had firm opinions. It is not the novelist's business to "study the idiom of science," psychiatric terms and the like. "His task is to communicate images and ideas to the public," not to an "already primed group of experts" whose idiom "is a lazy, inept apology for not assimilating and reissuing the idea in an original and understood way." Stories set in a "Peter Pan fairy-godmother world," are sordid and sorrowful: "Gaiety should be brave, it should have stout legs of truth, not a gelatine base of dreams and wishes." Henry James "is like a sculptor in wood, chopping his own trees, hacking and sawing to get the exact core of his design, examining each branch and bit of sap for its effect on the inner meat. He is after his story for truth's sake, not yours." Great plays "must show clearly the ruling hand of destiny behind a man's deeds. Not background, not enemies, not social unrest, not environment, not Marx—but Destiny. There is no thrill on the stage equal to the simple primary *theater* of the knock of Fate. Fate working through characters, not through the playwright or the exigencies of the plot."

The diarist is also eloquent on the pleasures, the torments and the obligations of the writer's life. She feelingly observes pestering friends "so happy to gnaw away at the bones of your energy and talent," complacent self-important literary monitors whom she likens to "clumsy, overweight jockeys" riding "delicate Arabian steeds," and her response on first hearing Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* or listening to Gieseking play Debussy. Often angry and aggrieved but seldom spiteful or whiny, distracted and amused by human frailty (not least her own), she insisted on the right, indeed the duty, of writers to challenge convention, take risks, court failure:

> One of the greatest sports in life is killing the goose that lays the golden egg. It's a bastard goose, anyway, and the pampering of it is a form of cowardice and human degradation. All integrity is sacrificed on this fear of the Queen Goose—business is built on it, art is slaughtered on it, truth tailored for it.... All my life seems to have been spent killing geese that lay golden eggs, and it's a fine decent sport—superior to killing small birds, horses, or lions.

The Diaries of Dawn Powell complement the time and the geography of her fiction, which are, for the general reader today, as remote and exotic as the Court of Versailles. But her prose is still as fresh and tonic as it was when she wrote it. In 1931, she defined her three necessities: "1) having people I like like me, 2) being in the place I want to be (New York, usually), 3) being able to write what I want." By these criteria alone, her life must be judged a success. Once again she is on the verge of a "rediscovery," only this time, thanks to the revelations of her diaries, readers will be better prepared than they once were to assess her mind and her art. She was the unrivaled observer of her piece of New York turf. Opinion-makers thrust her aside to make room for worse writers, but she didn't fizzle out or lose control of her bumpy life, or surrender her belief in the dignity of her own work.

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Born Free

BY COLIN MCGINN

Beyond Prejudice: The Moral Significance of Human and Nonhuman Animals by Evelyn B. Pluhar

(Duke University Press, 392 pp., $49.95)

Strange to say, not all human institutions owe their existence to sound moral reasoning—not even those that have proved themselves most durable. Monarchy, slavery, patriarchy, dictatorship, child labor: these practices were sustained by power and advantage, not by their invulnerability to moral criticism. Spurious moral defenses, often bizarrely ingenious, have grown up around these practices, enabling their beneficiaries to soothe their consciences or to ward off their critics, but few would now pretend that these exercises of power enjoy any defensible ethical rationale. The suggestion that slaves were *made* to be exploited, by God or nature, would not now be received as anything other than self-serving delusion. Enslaved persons have their inherent moral rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and the institution of slavery violates these rights. This may not have been obvious then, but it is a platitude now.

In recent decades, we have grown used to hearing a comparable claim made on behalf of animals. It is said that they, too, are the victims of unjust exploitation. We humans use them as means to our ends, without regard for their inalienable rights. We treat animals in ways that are contrary to their interests—as when we eat them, confine them, experiment on them, hunt them, wear their skins—and this is a plain violation of moral principle. We are, in effect, discriminating against animals on the basis of their species. Isn't this really just an exercise of brute power, devoid of moral foundation? Isn't it disturbingly like slavery, except that we are exploiting members of other species? If so, the practices in question should be dismantled and animals accorded in law what their moral status requires. So the animal liberationist argument goes.

To these claims there is a natural answer, frequently offered. In the other examples of exploited groups, the victims are all persons, while animals are not—and persons are the only proper bearers of moral rights. Slavery is the exploitation of conscious, rational, moral beings, with a sense of the future and their own potential, and capable of protesting against their enslavement; but pigs and cows and chickens fall short of this standard, being at most sentient and conative. So there is no valid comparison to be made here: it is wrong to violate the rights of reflective articulate beings, but animals do not fall into this category. Thus there is nothing arbitrary about the difference in the ways that we treat members of our own species and members of other species.

This reply has persuaded many people that the case of animals lays no serious claim on their moral attention. But it is open to a fairly obvious retort. What about those members of the human species who fail to qualify as full persons

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in the intended sense—the very young, the senile, the mentally retarded, the brain-damaged? The mental faculties of such individuals are severely truncated relative to those of the typical human adult, but we do not exclude them from the moral community, doing to them what we routinely do to animals. Compare a normal chimpanzee to a severely retarded human child unable to take care of itself or to speak or to reason. Given that neither qualifies as a rational moral being, capable of asserting its rights, why do we allow vivisection of the chimp but not of the child? Surely, if moral significance attaches only to full persons, then the child should be granted no more protection than the chimp, or the pig awaiting slaughter.

Do we want to accept this? There is an obvious dilemma here: either give up the link between personhood and moral rights or regard animals *and* mentally limited humans as both lacking basic moral rights. For in neither case are we dealing with full personhood, which is the alleged touchstone of moral worth. Evelyn Pluhar's book is devoted to the evaluation of this argument for animal rights. Taking her cue from Peter Singer's use of the argument in *Animal Liberation*, she undertakes to state it as rigorously as possible and then to defend it against every objection she has heard of or can think of. Her book is exceptionally thorough, expertly reasoned and entirely convincing.

The essence of Pluhar's case is that there is no way to protect what she calls "marginal humans" from moral exclusion that does not extend to nonhuman animals. Once it is acknowledged that full personhood is not a necessary condition for moral significance, as in the case of marginal humans, then we must grant the same moral status to animals, on the ground that no morally relevant distinction can be drawn between the two cases. Pluhar is absolutely determined to argue through every possible objection to the argument, even some of the sillier ones, so that no doubt can be left about its cogency. The upshot, after the dialectical dust has settled, is that there is a deep inconsistency in current moral attitudes—a double standard that cries out for rectification. The simple truth is that we unjustly discriminate against members of other species for transparently selfish reasons.

It is a commonplace reaction to Pluhar's argument that marginal humans are human, while other animals are not. This is the ground of the moral distinction that we habitually make. Such a "homocentrist" position takes the human species to define the boundaries of the moral community: you are morally considerable if, and only if, you are a member of the human species. It is important to see, as Pluhar emphasizes, that this is *not* a version of the full personhood view—that it is, indeed, incompatible with it, since not all humans are full persons. What is being claimed, rather, is that a biological criterion, not a psychological one, is decisive from a moral point of view.

There are many problems, however, with this "speciesist" defense. Isn't it really just a form of bigotry, analogous to claiming that the biological characteristics of skin color or sex are morally crucial? What if scientists made discoveries that caused them to redraw the boundaries of the species, so that in fact we featherless bipeds are composed of two distinct species with different evolutionary origins and DNA structures? Would each of us then be right to conclude that only the species that *we* belonged to had moral standing, so that the other humanoids could be treated as we now treat pigs and mice? Do intelligent extraterrestrials automatically lack moral significance because they are not of our biological kind? Is God beyond the moral pale because he is not biologically human? Would the truth of the Bible imply that Jesus Christ suffered no moral evil by being crucified, since he was not fully of our species (being immaculately conceived and so on)? How can morality depend upon biology, anyway? Surely my rights stem from the kind of life I am able to lead—from my status as a psychological being—not from whatever biological substrate happens to underlie this. If I find out that I am not human after all, having been deposited here by a UFO, do I then voluntarily give up all my rights to decent treatment? No, I do not: my biological type is a contingent fact about me, and it is neither here nor there when it comes to assessing my moral rights.

It might now be said that marginal humans differ morally from animals not because they are human, but because they are members of a species whose *typical* members are full persons. The retarded child is not a full person, but he or she is at least a member of a species characterized by such superior beings. Thus, whenever a species has typical members who are full persons, any member of the species enjoys moral standing, even if that particular member falls woefully short of the mark. This suggestion is not "speciesist" in the strict sense, and it seems to give marginal humans a moral foothold; but Pluhar shows that it will scarcely do as a sound moral principle.

The suggestion locates the basis of a being's moral rights not in the intrinsic nature of that being, but in its relation to other beings: the retarded human is not valuable by virtue of his individual traits, but only because of his relation to other more richly endowed humans. This implies that if these relations change, then so does his moral standing. The marginal human's moral worth depends precisely upon his being marginal. But now, if the human species manages so to pollute the earth that in time a typical member is no longer a full person, almost everyone having been chemically brain-damaged, then no human will enjoy moral significance—though each is at the level of marginal humans *now* accorded moral worth. Similarly, an individual dog would become morally significant if its species, but not it, were to develop into full canine persons, despite the fact that there has been no intrinsic change in that dog. But how can you change an individual's moral status simply by fiddling with what is true of other members of its species? Surely we treat individuals with consideration because of what is true of them, not because of the contingent fact that they share their kind with other individuals who differ from them.

All this, of course, is a contrived attempt to escape the obvious. What makes the marginal human morally considerable is not that her conspecifics are typically full persons; it is simply that she is herself a sentient individual with desires and conditions of well-being. The human infant, though not yet a rational moral agent, can yet experience pleasure and pain, can have its desires satisfied or thwarted, can have its life wrongfully taken. The pre-rational infant is a subject of consciousness, a goal-directed seeker of well-being, an avoider of harm. Marginal humans can be happy or unhappy, according to whether their needs and desires are satisfied, and this is what underlies their claim on our moral attention. But it is equally true that animals are sentient conative individuals with conditions of well-being, and in some cases there is no relevant distinction to be drawn between them and marginal humans in respect of their degree of sentience and goal-directedness. Put crudely, some animals are as smart as some humans. Only by ignoring the moral relevance of sentience can we draw a sharp dividing line between animals and the less fortunate members of our own species.

Pluhar explores these issues in detail, dealing with such objections as that the mistreatment of marginal humans has a worse effect on the moral character of the agent than the mistreatment of animals, or produces worse utilitarian consequences in the human population. She

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has no difficulty showing the weakness of these arguments. But she also wishes to find a positive rationale for the moral relevance of sentience. What precisely is it about sentience that makes it so morally crucial? This part of the book will be particularly interesting for old hands at this subject, because here she parts company with Peter Singer and proposes a novel way to conceive of the rights of animals.

It might seem that sentience matters because moral value depends solely upon the maximization of pleasure and the minimization of pain—the utilitarian position. Since sentient beings such as dogs and gorillas experience pleasure and pain, we should act so as to maximize utility in their case. Utilitarianism thus morally unites animals, marginal humans and full persons, since all are receptacles of pleasure and pain. But there are problems. Utilitarianism allows us to sacrifice an innocent if this will produce a greater balance of pleasure over pain in sentient beings as a group; it permits what we would normally take to be a violation of individual rights. This is no comfort, however, to the animal vivisection community: whereas utilitarianism in principle permits experimenting on animals for the benefit of humans, it also permits experimenting on humans—marginal and typical—for the benefit of other humans (and animals!). Many find this morally repugnant, and reasonably so. And the "replacement argument" of the utilitarians is no better. If our duty is simply to maximize pleasure and minimize pain, then there can be no objection to killing individuals so long as we replace them with other individuals who will function as new repositories of pleasurable experience. The net amount of pleasure will not be reduced if I produce a new sentient being to take up where the old one has involuntarily left off. Thus is the right to life abrogated by the utilitarian principle.

Pluhar is right to conclude that this is not a workable moral theory. We need a viewpoint that finds a place for individual rights, human and animal. What, then, will these rights depend upon? Not on the capacity to claim rights, or else marginal humans are, with animals, off the moral map. We must look instead to what it is that rights serve to protect. Building upon the ideas of Alan Gewirth, Pluhar defends the view that rights stem from the capacity to care about what happens to one—from desires and their satisfaction. The emphasis thus shifts from sentience to conation, from the passive reception of sensations to the active seeking of goals. One can only satisfy one's desires if one is alive and free to act in appropriate ways; so one values one's life and one's freedom because these are necessary conditions for satisfying one's desires. What is presupposed by the valuable is itself valuable. Hence life and freedom are valuable and require the protection that the ascription of rights affords.

Desires vary, of course, from individual to individual, and some sets of desires are more extensive than others, though the satisfaction of desires is no less important to an individual because his desires are more limited than the desires of someone else. A dog's desire to run free does not matter less to it than my desire to enjoy a ballet performance matters to me. A sentient conative being has the right to the freedom and the continued existence necessary for the satisfaction of its desires, whatever these may be. This is the ultimate basis of my right not to be imprisoned or eaten or experimented upon, and the same is true of a chimp's right to similar freedoms.

So sentience matters, not because it is the vehicle of pleasure and pain, but because it is concomitant with a goal-directed agent that requires freedom from interference in order to fulfill its purposes. The sentient conative subject cares about what will happen to it, and hence is of a kind to have basic moral rights. This point of view unifies (many) animals with normal and marginal humans in a nonarbitrary way: all are morally considerable in virtue of their nature as sentient conative beings. We cannot treat animals as we would not treat mentally comparable humans.

The consequences of adopting this perspective are large. The human practice of using animals to serve human ends, regardless of their interests, turns out to lack a cogent ethical basis. When our interests conflict with theirs we cannot simply override them on the grounds that animals fail to count as morally considerable. It is really just a form of prejudice to count their interests as somehow less intrinsically significant than ours, especially when it is a matter of their vital interests versus our trivial interests. They deserve the same moral respect that we accord to marginal humans. When wondering what to do about a conflict of interest, always ask yourself whether you would countenance some proposed way of resolving it in the case of marginal humans: that is the acid test for whether unfair discrimination is being practiced. Would you shoot retarded people because they are encroaching on your food supply or messing up your back yard? Would you kill and eat them because of the culinary pleasure to be derived? If your answer is no, then you should return a similar answer in respect of animals.

Evelyn Pluhar has pushed this debate to the next level, challenging her readers to refute her arguments or to change their attitudes. She is moved as much by a passion for reason as by the plight of animals; and indeed it is the sheer irrationality of conventional attitudes toward animals that strikes some of us as humanity's worst moral failing. It is bad enough to mistreat animals for blatantly selfish reasons, but to defend this mistreatment by means of transparently shoddy arguments is almost as objectionable. It is not just the welfare of animals that is at stake here. The integrity of human reason is also on the line. Where is our intellectual pride?

COLIN MCGINN is professor of philosophy at Rutgers University. He is the author most recently of *Problems in Philosophy* (Blackwell).

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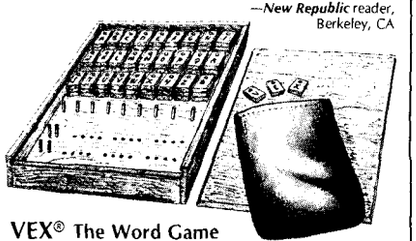

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Grandfathered in

RECENTLY MY 94-YEAR-OLD GRANDfather showed me the Sabbath candlesticks his mother brought over on the boat from Poland eight-and-a-half decades ago. Those treasured items, wrapped in a bundle of sheets, were the Lanes' only possessions when—still named Levine—they first set foot on these shores. Intent on being a "real" American, my grandfather enlisted in World War I and spent the next forty years in the Army. As a military retiree since 1955, his pension receipts have defied actuarial gravity. Has America gotten more out of my grandfather than it paid in? I like to think so, especially since I'd never have been born if he hadn't come. At the very least, his story, and millions like it, should give some pause to immigration restrictionists.

MY COLLEAGUE MICHAEL LIND knows exactly how many immigrants America needs: 700,000 entrants a year would be "much too high," he opined in these pages last week, whereas 290,000 would help to "bring U.S. population growth in line with other developed countries and to raise U.S. wages...." As a restrictionist brief, Lind's bolster-the-little-guy argument is superficially more palatable than Pat Buchanan's raw Eurocentrism. Ultimately, however, it is no more persuasive. For starters, Lind should calm down about the magnitude of what he twice refers to as the "threat" of immigration. The influx of immigrants per thousand U.S. inhabitants lags far behind the pace set in the nineteenth century by the Irish, Germans and Chinese who built much of this country. Between 1901 and 1910, the rate peaked at 10.4 immigrants per 1,000 inhabitants. Between 1970 and 1990, the inflow averaged about a fourth of that. According to Lind, the latest Bureau of Labor Statistics research proves that half of a "recent" (unspecified) decrease in unskilled workers' wages is due to immigration. I've seen other studies that "prove" immigrants' spending and investment creates new jobs or that their tax payments outweigh their welfare take. The question of whether immigration is good or bad for the American economy is like the question of whether the federal budget deficit is good or bad for the American economy: it all depends on your frame of reference. Do the benefits to today's generations from deficit spending outweigh the probably large but unknown costs to tomorrow's generations? If you're collecting Social Security today, you're more likely to say yes; if you're hoping to collect it forty years from now, you might say no. The purported harm to American wages from immigration—an argument restrictionists have been making since the 1850s—doesn't settle the more fateful question of whether the country generally will be better off a generation hence. Surely Lind doesn't mean to suggest that it was a mistake to admit all those scruffy Europeans a century ago.

HE DOES CLAIM THAT THE period between the 1920s and the 1960s was a golden immigration-free age during which "[t]he greatest gains in income by the American middle and working classes, both white and black, took place...." (I'm not so sure that any "working-class" windfall would justify the injury done to American democracy by the explicitly racist Immigration Act of 1924, which ushered in this golden era.) Lind's sweeping causal insinuation simply ignores such intervening economic watersheds as the mechanization of Southern agriculture and the northward migration of blacks or the erection of a vast peacetime military establishment. Besides, his reading of the data is debatable. The 1930s were marked by the slowest immigration and the deepest mass poverty in American history. The economic expansion of the 1940s and 1950s actually coincided with a steady *increase* in the rate of immigration.

AT TIMES, LIND VEERS DANGEROUSly close to the very Buchananism he elsewhere attacks. "[M]ass immigration produces a work force [which is] divided by ethnicity" and hence more difficult to unionize, he argues. It is absurd to suggest that immigration is the source of ethnic tension in the American work force, and that, without it, workers might link arms at last. The American labor force has been ethnically divided since the day Africans were first brought here as slaves; black-white conflict alone would continue to undermine working-class solidarity even if we never admitted another immigrant. Of course, in America, modern trade unionism is itself largely a European import. That said, the ebb and flow of unionism has depended more on technology, trade and government labor policies than on trends in immigration. In the period Lind is talking about, the mandatory union dues checkoff, imposed by FDR as a political reward to the CIO during World War II, was by far the biggest spur to unionization.

LIND GIVES THE GAME AWAY WHEN he says that "[t]he most generous and egalitarian countries in modern times have been culturally homogeneous nation-states admitting few or no poor immigrants, like those of northern Europe and Japan." Why is Japan, with its rigid social hierarchy and subordinated women, more "egalitarian" than the U.S.? Actually, Germany (millions of Turkish *Gastarbeiter*) and Japan (large unacknowledged populations of Korean-origin non-citizens and Filipina bar girls) are societies that have hypocritically pretended not to need or allow immigration, while importing disenfranchised foreigners to do their dirty work. America, like the rest of the developed world, does face a genuine dilemma: the population of poorer countries is growing far faster than ours is, and thus a vast pool of labor is arising to compete with Americans either as immigrants here or workers at home, whether we like it or not. But let Japan and Europe try to stick their fingers in the dike. The flexibility and adaptability of American capitalism mean (a) that we can find arrangements of comparative advantage with developing countries whereby they do the tasks America outgrows and (b) that we can continue to profit from absorbing a reasonably large share of the brightest and most adventuresome of their excess population.

LIND CALLS DAVID OBEY AND other liberals who have joined the congressional move for lower ceilings on legal immigration "a brave minority," standing up to an elite that rationalizes its addiction to cheap Guatemalan help with sentimental "poetry" about the Statue of Liberty. As if it's ever taken much bravery to blame this country's ills on outsiders! In a nation where practically everyone is descended from an immigrant, a tolerant attitude toward immigration is merely an appropriate expression of civic humility. I once made this argument to my grandfather, of all people, as we were driving through one of Washington's more ethnically diverse areas. He was muttering about the odd-looking Ethiopians and Salvadorans he saw through the window. "People used to say the same thing when they saw you in New York seventy years ago," I countered. "That was different," he huffed. "We wanted to assimilate." Whereupon I dropped the subject. But I do recall thinking that one of those Salvadorans will probably have the same absurd dialogue with his grandson sixty years from now.

CHARLES LANE

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Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

Will CBEST Survive?

Few things matter as much to teachers as being considered professionals. When you are a professional, people assume you know what you are doing, and they tend to go along with your judgment in your area of expertise. But while doctors, lawyers, and architects won this acceptance many years ago, teachers are still fighting to gain it. One problem is that some teachers have not been ready to go along with the kind of rigorous standards that govern the entrance to other professions. Some have even fought against minimum-competency tests for prospective teachers.

The last thing children of color need is to be taught by teachers who don't meet a minimum standard.

Unfortunately, this is now happening in California in connection with the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST). CBEST is a minimum-competency exam that California teachers must pass before they are certified and when they are seeking a credential in a different field. Some people who have failed the exam, and groups that support them, are challenging the test in court. They say that CBEST does not test professional competence so it is no basis on which to deny certification. Furthermore, they say it is unfair because a higher percentage of people of color fail than white people.

Admittedly, CBEST does not tell you who will be a good teacher. It does tell you which people have no business standing in front of a class because they don't have eighth- to tenth-grade skills in English and math. The test has three parts—reading, math, and writing. On the reading section, there are paragraphs of 200 words or less and 40 scored multiple-choice questions about the material in the paragraphs. There are also 40 scored math questions. Here's an example:

If a child was born on September 30, 1976, then to the nearest month, how old was that child on November 1, 1984?

A. 85 months; B. 86 months; C. 97 months; D. 98 months; E. 99 months

Some of the math questions are harder than this and some are easier. (CBEST used to include simple algebra and geometry, but these questions have been dropped.) The writing section asks for two brief essays on set topics—for example, discuss a teacher or a class with which you had difficulties. None of the questions requires any information that does not appear in the questions themselves.

Extremely easy? That's right. And the conditions for passing CBEST make it even easier. People taking the test have four hours, but the three parts do not have to be completed at one sitting. You may spend four hours on a single part and keep on taking the entire test, or any of its parts, until you achieve a passing grade. This is roughly 65 to 70 percent on reading and math set at an eighth- to tenth-grade level. The standard for the writing section is similar. However, if you don't pass one, or even two, of the sections, it is possible to compensate by doing well on the other section or sections. In the 13 years of CBEST's existence, 86 percent of approximately 500,000 prospective teachers have passed. However, it is true that people of color have failed at a higher rate than whites. The 13-year cumulative average for white test-takers is 91.6 percent; for Asian-Americans, 74.9 percent; for Hispanics, 71.6 percent; and for African-Americans, 55.9 percent.

This of course is the basis for the court challenge. The plaintiffs argue that the test must be racist if so many people of color fail. They also say that the low pass rate is harmful to students of color because it will deprive them of the role models they need.

But is it O.K. for students to be taught by teachers who can't understand a tenth-grade textbook or figure out the answer to an easy math problem? Here is a simple test: Ask the parents in the Asian or Hispanic or African-American communities whether they want role models for their children who can't read and write English at a high school level. Ask them where their children will be in 20 years if they have not learned these skills because their teachers didn't have them. The last thing children of color need is to be taught by teachers who don't meet a minimum standard. Furthermore, if CBEST is killed, the level of people in the teaching profession will drop generally and California students of all races will suffer.

Those who are challenging CBEST have been denied jobs—and we can understand why they want to eliminate the exam. But they are doing no favor to the students they would teach. And those who are going along with them and offering them support are doing no favor to the teaching profession—or public education. What can we say of a profession devoted to teaching our young people that does not demand at least a basic competency in reading, writing, and math of its members? The problems that minority candidates have with CBEST mean that we must do a much better job of eliminating the disparities between the education of minority children and the others. Abolishing the test will only help to perpetuate them.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1996 by Albert Shanker.

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